

1. Introduction: "It's the Culture, Stupid!"¹

We have seen the enemy and he is us.

—Pogo, cartoon figure²

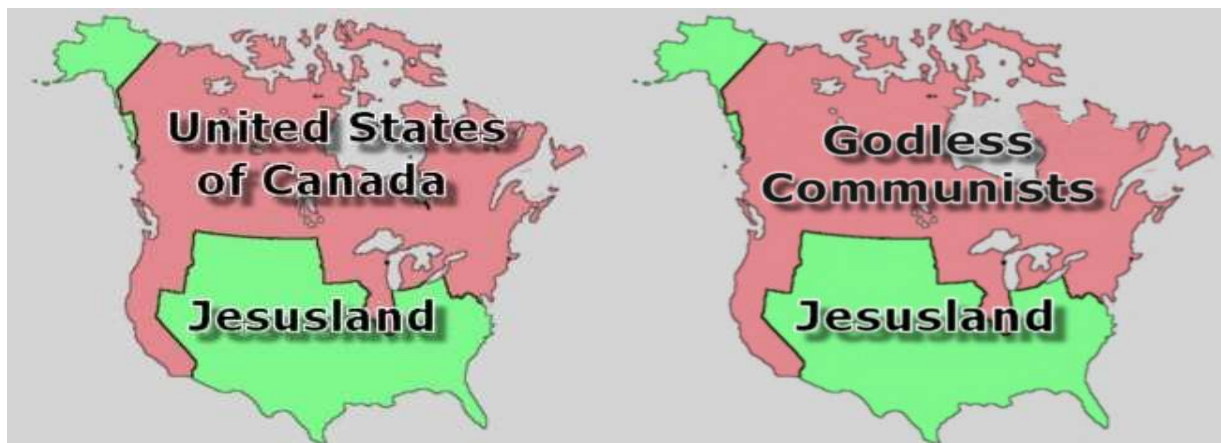


Fig. 1. The two images shown here started circulating shortly after the 2004 presidential election. The map on the left was created by G. Webb on November 2, 2004, one day after the election. Whoever created the map on the right as a response was lost in the vastness of the world wide web (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesusland_map, 02/18/2006).

In 1992, Bill Clinton used "It's the economy, stupid!"³ as the central slogan of his presidential campaign. Clinton, then governor of Arkansas, eventually beat the incumbent President George H. W. Bush, running on a platform that focused on economic issues and heavily criticizing the Bush administration for job losses and the recession of the early 1990s. Flash forward to the 2000 presidential elections: Not only the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) realized that "It's the culture, stupid!" epitomized the unofficial motto of the different presidential campaigns. Thus, *Blueprint*, the magazine of the DLC, put the slogan on its cover in the aftermath of the election and tried to figure out in a title story how the perceived cultural divide could be bridged.⁴ Flash forward even further to the 2004 presidential election and the talk about "A divided nation"⁵ and the "red-blue divide"⁶ was omnipresent. The divisions clearly seemed to go beyond mere political polarization. In a poll conducted by the *Christian Science Monitor*, 56.4 percent agreed with the statement that "America is so bitterly polarized that there can't be a healing of the divide."⁷ In the new millennium, cultural issues had replaced economic issues as the central points of interest for politicians and voters alike. A majority regarded "Moral values" as the pivotal issue during the 2004 presidential election, 80 percent of whom then voted for George W. Bush.⁸ Observing this trend in his book *What's the Matter with*

¹ Title of the July 12, 2001 issue of *Blueprint*, the official magazine of the Democratic Leadership Council. Cf. http://www.ndol.org/ndol_ci.cfm?kaid=132&subid=193&contentid=3517.

² "Pogo," Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pogo>.

³ The slogan was first used mostly internally in the Clinton camp and made its way into the mass media from there. Cf. "United States presidential election, 1992," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._presidential_election,_1992.

⁴ Cf. http://www.ndol.org/ndol_ci.cfm?kaid=132&subid=193&contentid=3517.

⁵ Editorial board of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, "A nation divided," *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 3 Nov. 2004, http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/opinion/197992_nationalead.html.

⁶ Daniel Yankelovich, "Across the red-blue divide: How to start a conversation," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 15 Oct. 2004, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/1015/p10s02-coop.html>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Cf. "Election Results," CNN.com,

Kansas, Thomas Frank laments that many of the Republican voters, especially in heartland states like Kansas, cast their ballot against their economic self-interests.⁹ As a result of a conservative backlash which successfully portrayed the USA as “two nations” by pitting religious, traditional, and patriotic common people against an imagined, blurry liberal elite being depicted in the worst stereotypes, formerly Democratic and liberal states now are a reservoir of values voters who are motivated by cultural and religious issues like abortion or gay rights.¹⁰ Assessing the red-blue divide, Frank concludes: “The two regions were more than voting blocs; they were complete sociological profiles, two different Americas at loggerheads with each other.”¹¹

Yet, the question of what exactly splits the United States into two seemingly warring camps remains. The two maps depicted in Figure 1 already give a good indicator of the roots of the contemporary conflict. The map on the left labeled red states as “Jesusland” and made blue states part of a new nation called “United States of Canada,” expressing the alienation of blue staters from red America and showing a certain degree of both frustration and bewilderment with the deep, evangelical religiosity of “Jesusland.” The second map then is home to what Frank calls the conservative backlash. This map propagates the exact opposite: The negative connotation of “Jesusland” transported in the first image is turned into a marker of positive self-reference, while “United States of Canada” now is being replaced with “Godless Communists,” conveying the image of secular or even atheist and un-American blue staters.¹² Analyzing the 2004 election and the congruent state of the disunited union, Harvard government professor David King diagnosed that “[y]ou’re seeing a deepening of the secular-religious divide.”¹³ And Howard Fineman added in *Newsweek* that “[o]nce again, the country on Election Day produced a portrait in Red and Blue. Only this time the hues were deeper and more glaring, divided between the devout and the secular, the traditional and the socially less so.”¹⁴

Thus, accompanying all the chatter about political polarization and “moral values” was the recourse to an already well-established explanatory concept: the culture wars model. While Samuel P. Huntington saw the post-Cold War era marked by a “clash of civilizations”¹⁵ fueled by religious and

<http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states/US/P/00/epolls.0.html>. Cf. also Charles Krauthammer, “‘Moral Values’ Myth,” *The Washington Post* 12 Nov. 2004, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A44082-2004Nov11.html>. Krauthammer disputes that moral values played a deciding role. In his reading, the combination of other issues like the war in Iraq was more important. But Krauthammer certainly cannot negate the fact that “Moral Values” were identified by 22 percent of the voters as the single most deciding issue, followed by “Economy/Jobs” with 19 percent. Yet, “Moral Values” is also a very ambiguous term and concept. Republicans/conservatives certainly have a different set of moral values in mind than Democrats/liberals, to use that admittedly simple distinction here. Exit polls showed for example that to Republican voters, issues like religiosity, traditional family values, or patriotism were of utmost importance.

⁹ Cf. Thomas Frank, *What’s the Matter with Kansas* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2005) 68, 114.

¹⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, 13ff.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹² Cf. Wikipedia, “Jesusland map,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesusland_map.

¹³ Quoted in “A nation divided,” *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 3 Nov. 2004, http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/opinion/197992_nationaled.html.

¹⁴ Howard Fineman, “A Sweet Victory... And a Tough Loss,” *Newsweek* 15 Nov. 2004.

¹⁵ Huntington published *The Clash of Civilizations* in 1996 and his theory of conflict between different

cultural differences, others claimed to witness a culture war at the home front. Hence, stories carrying the tag “divided nation” were often complemented by congenial headlines like “ ‘Culture wars’ shaping election,”¹⁶ “Election Boils Down to a Culture war,”¹⁷ or “Holy Joe! A Culture War!”¹⁸ However, some scholars and commentators have criticized the culture war metaphor as too harsh a description and denied that there was a deep and unbridgeable rift. Instead, they warned that turning a war of words into a war of worlds would only trigger more cultural strife. Nonetheless, blogrolls on the internet were stuffed with links to virtual debates about the culture war battlegrounds and many Americans seemed to accept the culture wars as a reality and interpretative leitmotif.

The contemporary debate about the metaphor of the American culture wars has already been raging since the early 1990s. In 1991, sociologist James Davison Hunter started the academic discourse with his book *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*.¹⁹ From there, the idea and the term leaked into the broader cultural and political arena and became a household name in discussions about the polarized state of the union and various social conflicts. As early as 1992, then presidential hopeful Pat Buchanan proclaimed at the Republican National Convention: “There is a religious war going on in this country. It is a culture war as critical to the kind of nation we shall be as the Cold War itself, for this war is for the soul of America.”²⁰ The campaigns and the aftermath of the 2004 presidential election were undoubtedly one of the high points of what Buchanan deemed the war “for the soul of America.”²¹ And this war seemingly continued unabated in 2005. From the Terri Schiavo case to Hurricane Katrina to the “War on Christmas” to protests against gay marriage to myriad other incidents, every case of cultural cleavage can be bend and, if needed, recontextualized so that the label “culture war” fits and sticks.

The biggest issue to which the label culture was attached in 2005 was the controversy surrounding Intelligent Design (ID). In October 2004, the School Board of Dover, Pennsylvania, voted to teach ID as an alternative to the theory of evolution. Two months later, in December 2005, eleven parents filed a lawsuit against the school board, arguing that Intelligent Design was a religiously inspired theory and that its teaching in public schools would thus violate the constitutional separation between church and state, while the defendants claimed that ID was a thorough scientific theory, a

civilizations, most notably between the Western and the Muslim world, gained widespread attention after the attacks of 9/11 and the *War On Terror* in Afghanistan and later in Iraq. However, in his latest book, *Who are we?* Huntington turns his attention back to what he calls the culture war at home. Yet, his culture war is different from the ones I will analyze as he identifies foreign infiltration, especially by Mexican immigrants, as a dire threat to American national identity and Anglo-Protestant culture (Cf. Samuel P. Huntington, *Who are we? America’s Great Debate* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2004).

¹⁶ Bill Sammon, “‘Culture wars’ shaping election,” *Washington Times* 15 March 25.
<http://www.washingtontimes.com/national/20040325-124959-4632r.htm>.

¹⁷ Howard Fineman, “Election Boils Down to a Culture War,” *Newsweek Online*, 22 Oct.
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3225677/>.

¹⁸ “Holy Joe! A Culture War!” Editorial of *The Nation*, 24 Sept. 2000,
<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20001009/editors>.

¹⁹ James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

²⁰ Nancy J. Davis and Robert V. Robinson, “A War for America’s Soul?” *Cultural Wars in American Politics: Critical Reviews of a Popular Myth*, ed. Rhys H. Williams (Hawthorne, New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1997) 39.

²¹ *Ibid.*

well-scrutinized alternative to evolution.²² Hence, another chapter in the culture wars had been opened. An initially local conflict turned into a national firestorm and created a media frenzy that would not let a day pass without a headline mentioning “The Evolution Wars”²³ or embed it into a grander scheme by stating that “Darwin’s Theory Evolves into Culture War.”²⁴ From the mass media, the topic meandered into the realm of pop culture: ID was a mainstay in comedy formats like *The Daily Show* and even the 70s rock band *New York Dolls* appeared back on the scene with an evolved style and a new single called *Dance Like a Monkey*: “You’re designed so intelligent, ain’t no way this was an accident, c’mon shake your monkey hips, my pretty little creationist. Oh yeah!”²⁵

Thus, the ID controversy certainly enjoyed a guaranteed spot in the limelight of the national ob-session with sensational schisms because it resonated so well with the American imagination of all-around cultural strife. It was build up into a showdown between science and religion, pitting two different and clashing worldviews against each other.²⁶ For many of those actively involved in the “Evolution Wars,” this conflict was ultimately about the self-image of the nation, about final truths, about whether the USA is a Christian or a secular country. Christianity and secularity seem to be two poles between which the nation has been constantly wavering since its inception and from issue to issue. The French philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy, traveling the USA in the footsteps of fellow countryman and famous chronicler of early America²⁷ Alexis de Tocqueville, perhaps rightly observed: “Rarely has a country questioned itself so anxiously about its destiny; few are the nations prey to such a vertigo of identity.”²⁸ Not surprisingly then, the controversy is nothing new as this question has kept the nation in suspense ever since Darwinism entered the stage. From the Monkey Trial in 1925 to the resurgence of biblical creationism in the 1980s,²⁹ evolution has been at the center of a tautological argument, having come under attack in particular from conservative Christians, who have repeatedly claimed that Darwinism is anti-religious and teaches atheism.³⁰

²² “The Road to the Courthouse,” *beliefnet.com*, http://www.beliefnet.com/story/176/story_17688_1.html.

²³ Claudia Wallis, “The Evolution Wars,” *Time.com* 7 Aug. 2005, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1090909-1,00.html>.

²⁴ Lisa Anderson, “Darwin’s Theory Evolves into Culture War,” *Chicago Tribune* 22 May, <http://www.truthout.org/cgi-bin/artman/exec/view.cgi/37/11299>.

²⁵ Lyrics to the song *Dance Like A Monkey* by the *New York Dolls*, <http://www.lyricspremium.com/correct.php?id=1000476>.

²⁶ A detailed analysis of the media coverage of the ID controversy will be carried out in the case study of this work. For a good starting point, cf. the Nieman Report on Intelligent Design, which can be accessed at: http://www.poynter.org/resource/94013/NR05W_Intelligent_Design.pdf.

²⁷ I will use “America” and “USA” respectively “United States” as synonyms. I know that this is wrong not only from a geographical point of view, but this work focuses solely on the United States. Thus, this usage should be allowed in my work, especially since it adds variety to my writing.

²⁸ Bernard-Henri Lévy, *American Vertigo: Traveling America in the Footsteps of Tocqueville*, (New York: Random House, 2006) 238.

²⁹ Cf. “ID timeline,” *Science and Theology News*, 10 Oct. 2005, http://www.stnews.org/articles.php?category=guide&guide=Intelligent%20Design&article_id=2277.

³⁰ Cf. Dennis Overbye, “Philosophers Notwithstanding, Kansas School Board Redefines Science,” *New York Times* 15 Oct. 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/15/science/sciencespecial2/15evol.html?ex=1289710800&en=8222cfc9c70fd951&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland&emc=rss>. Cf. also Clyde Wilcox, *Onward Christian Soldiers: The Religious Right in American Politics* (New York: Westview Press, 1996) 65f. Furthermore, a simple Google search combining “evolution” with “secular humanism”, “atheism”, or even “anti-Christian” will also

In this work, I will examine the controversy revolving around Intelligent Design in the United States and how it relates to the culture wars model as described by Hunter. As a necessary prerequisite for the contextualization of the ID discourse, however, I will first need to undertake a closer conceptual and theoretical examination of Hunter's model and the various responses to it – both in support of and in opposition to the existence of the culture wars in general and specifically his reading of the landscape of conflict in the United States. Although a case could be made that class or race struggles are also main motivations for cultural battlegrounds, I will have to exclude these areas both for reasons of coherence as well as a lack of space. In accordance with Hunter's thesis of a clash between "traditionalists" and "progressives," I will thus focus my attention on conservative Christianity and its struggle with modernity as the underlying cause that fuels the culture wars and therefore gives shape to the different fields of cultural conflict.³¹ The second main part of this paper will then move the discursive strategies of those involved in the Intelligent Design controversy to the fore of my analysis. Sociologist Peter Berger stated that language is "the great world-building instrumentality of man"³² and pointed out that reality is socially constructed. Following in his footsteps, Hunter already elaborated on the importance of public discourse and its mechanisms in the context of cultural conflict and concluded that "[t]he power to define reality is not an abstract power."³³ Emphasizing the importance of public discourse, Phillip E. Johnson, one of the foremost and most vocal proponents of ID, noted: "Victory in the creation-evolution debate therefore belongs to the party with the cultural authority to establish the ground rules that govern the discourse."³⁴ Hence, my main objective is to examine how different actors and groups engaged in the debate about Intelligent Design use language to shape the discourse in order to maintain or establish their own realities and power or alternatively their hold on power, because, in the words of Hunter, "cultural conflict is ultimately about the struggle for domination."³⁵ I will study how the different groups and sides in the conflict attempt to frame the discourse according to their own terms, how both sides struggle to claim the power of defining key terms and symbols, how they invoke different cultural labels and metaphors to set up societal boundaries and thus create cultural and social in- and out-groups, or how they try to regulate the access to the public sphere. As a basis for this analysis, I will first present the historic roots of the contemporary conflict over evolution and discuss the relationship between science and religion, which are often portrayed as being incompatible, as being in a state of warfare. My analytical focus will then move to events and discourse fragments related to the Dover case in 2005, which triggered the broader contemporary discourse about evolution and marked it as probably the defining issue of the culture wars in recent times. In my first initial reading of the various primary and secondary sources, it became obvious that the debate about Intelligent Design in the United States

bring up numerous results.

³¹ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 42f.

³² Peter Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967) 175.

³³ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 52.

³⁴ Quoted in: Robert T. Pennock, *Tower of Babel: The Evidence against the New Creationism* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999) 188.

³⁵ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 52.

was – and until today of course is – marked by a multi-level discourse: the mass media discourse, the scientific discourse, the political discourse, and finally the various subcultural discourses.³⁶ Due to the timeliness of the current debate about evolution and ID and the discursive orientation of this work as well as the immense scope of possible textual sources, I will rely on a few select essays and books as well as newspaper articles and editorials. The secondary and academic sources on Intelligent Design will mostly also be considered as part of the discourse, as the vast majority is of them is preoccupied with trying to slate either one side of the conflict and not with examining the mechanisms of the discourse. Thus, although there are some scholarly works that deal with the discursive strategies of the participants in the ID controversy or at least touch on the subject, the state of research concerning the specific questions I want to tackle is relatively thin.

Since my focal point are the discursive strategies and aims of the participants and stake holders in the ID controversy, my methodical approach will turn to critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the tool for exploring the underlying intentions and mechanisms of the discourse. CDA is an interdisciplinary approach focusing on how language and discourse shape, reproduce, and maintain social, cultural, and political power relations and vice versa.³⁷ In the following chapter, I will introduce the different theories and concepts I will draw on in this work, which include stereotyping and the framing theory.

Though CDA allows the possibility of the openness of outcome, my thesis aims firstly at proving that Hunter's culture wars model is a valid description of the current situation in the USA, which is marked by a struggle for power between two competing worldviews. Secondly, I want to show the mechanism of this struggle via the example of the recent ID controversy. Consequently, I expect that the discourse about Intelligent Design follows its historical antecedents and thus is only marginally about science, but rather serves to maintain and challenge structures of power and, congruent with the culture wars model, in its gist is a struggle for cultural dominance fought by polarized fringe groups. The goal of this analysis is thus to unearth the discursive strategies of the involved competing groups and, additionally, how they use the mass media and other media as spaces for the reproduction of power relations and to frame the debate on their own terms.

On a final note: Although I try to be as objective as possible, I cannot escape my own subjectivity and bias in choosing specific articles and incidents and interpreting the intentions of the various actors. Yet, the issue of whether antipathy towards the Religious Right – or atheist scientists – is morally justified is not part of the main focus of this work, even though my personal opinion can certainly be guessed by the attentive, deconstructive reader.

³⁶ One could examine even more discourse levels at this point, for example the philosophical or the specific religious discourse, but this would certainly overextend the limited scope of this work.

³⁷ For a first introduction to the method, cf. also Linda A. Wood and Rolf O. Kroger, *Doing Discourse Analysis: Methods for Studying Action in Talk and Text* (London: Sage Publications, 2000).

2. “Words as Weapons”:³⁸ Introducing the Concepts

The language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words home, Christ, master, on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit. His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadows of his language.

—James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*³⁹

Man is a language animal.

—Edward Sagarin, *Deviants and Deviance*⁴⁰

“Language is functional; people use it to achieve ends,”⁴¹ writes Alan Partington in his book *The Linguistics of Political Argument*. Referring to the culture wars, James Davison Hunter declares that “[t]he end, however, is to have the power to define the meaning of America.”⁴² Thus, the culture wars and the Intelligent Design controversy are always inextricably associated with the issue of whether the United States, “which is both remarkably religious and remarkably secular,”⁴³ “is a Christian nation specially blessed by God”⁴⁴ or “a secular state with a high wall of separation between church and state.”⁴⁵ Yet, Hunter even goes further by proclaiming that cultural conflict in the end is “a struggle to achieve or maintain the power to define reality.”⁴⁶ One could certainly tackle the phenomenon of the culture wars and subsequently the ID debate in many ways, for example from a purely philosophical or scientific perspective, but this would not satisfy the goal of my analysis, which sets out to lay bare the underlying aims and worldviews of those involved in what is often designated as cultural warfare. The French philosopher Louis Althusser illustrated this distinction:

Why does philosophy fight over words? The realities of the class struggle are ‘represented’ by ‘ideas’ which are ‘represented’ by words. In scientific and philosophical reasoning, the words (concepts, categories) are ‘instruments’ of knowledge. But in political, ideological and philosophical struggle, the words are also weapons, explosives or tranquillizers and poisons. Occasionally, the whole class struggle may be summed up in the struggle for one word against another word.⁴⁷

Words and texts, language and discourse then are at the root of cultural conflict, they are the means through which meaning is generated, reality created, identity defined, power maintained, challenged, established. Political theorist Ernesto Laclau encapsulates the gist by declaring that “[s]ociety can ... be understood as a vast argumentative texture through which people construct

³⁸ Headline of a blog entry by a blogger naming himself *Mike The Mad Biologist*. In this entry, he laments the propaganda by anti-evolutionists and criticizes that “rather than using language to communicate, to reason, and to inspire, the anti-evolutionists use language to bully and to destroy.” Cf. <http://mikethemadbiologist.blogspot.com/2005/02/words-as-weapons.html>.

³⁹ James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man: Text, Criticism, and Notes*. Ed. Chester G. Anderson (New York: Viking, 1968) 189.

⁴⁰ Edward Sagarin, *Deviants and Deviance: An Introduction to the Study of disvalued People and Behavior* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975) 127.

⁴¹ Alan Partington, *The Linguistics of Political Argument: The spin-doctor and the wolf-pack at the White House* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004) 27.

⁴² Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 64.

⁴³ George M. Marsden, *Religion and American Culture* (Orlando: Harcourt College Publishers, 2001) 1.

⁴⁴ Wilcox, 13.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 52.

⁴⁷ Quoted in: Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, “Philosophy as a Revolutionary Weapon. Interview with Louis Althusser”, *New Left Review* 1/64, November-December 1970, <http://newleftreview.org/?getpdf=NLR06301>.

their reality.”⁴⁸ Although cultural conflict has turned into actual violence on some occasions with the firebombing of abortion clinics or the assassination of abortion doctors in the 1990s, most of the culture wars have been fought with “words as weapons,” to use Althusser’s diction.

The method I will employ in order to decipher both the discursive constructs and strategies at play in the contemporary version of cultural strife in the United States is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). In the following, I will give a brief overview of CDA and discuss the specific features important for the realization of my analysis. Furthermore, this paper will not deal with theories like postmodernism, epistemology, constructivism, or poststructuralism, although they are certainly related to CDA and there is definitely an overlap between these theories and my work with regard to research questions and goals, analytical approaches and concepts. A deeper discussion of these concepts would surely be fruitful and interesting, especially against the background of my aim to examine the different social and cultural constructs involved in the culture wars and the ID controversy, but is simply beyond the scope of this paper. Additionally, due to the limited space of this work, an in-depth presentation of the debate about the definitions and principles of important conceptions like ‘reality’, ‘truth’, or ‘knowledge’ will also not be carried out.

2.1. “Language as Social Practice”:⁴⁹ Critical Discourse Analysis

What therefore is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms: ... truths are illusions of which one has forgotten they are illusions.
—Friedrich Nietzsche⁵⁰

Discourse builds objects, worlds, minds and social relations. It doesn’t just reflect them.
—Margaret Wetherell⁵¹

In her introductory quote, Margaret Wetherell repeats the paradigm that basic foundations of society and human life – knowledge, identity, truth, and ultimately reality – are constructed through language and discourse.⁵² Critical Discourse Analysis is a method which aims to examine the discursive strategies used by those involved in a given discourse with the goal to reveal inherent power relations and, with regard to the level of actors, “to expose their worldviews, their taken-for-granted

⁴⁸ Quoted in: Margaret Wetherell, “Debates in Discourse Research,” *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, ed. Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Tayler and Simeon J. Yates (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 389.

⁴⁹ Ruth Wodak, “What CDA is about – a summary of its history, important concepts and its development,” *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, eds. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 1.

⁵⁰ Quoted in: Reed Way Dasenbrock, “We’ve done It to Ourselves: The Critique of Truth and the Attack on Theory,” *PC Wars: Politics and Theory in the Academy*, ed. Jeffrey Williams (New York and London: Routledge, 1995) 175.

⁵¹ Margaret Wetherell, “Themes in Discourse Research: The Case of Diana,” *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, ed. Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Tayler and Simeon J. Yates (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 16.

⁵² The concept of reality is of course a widely debated topic not only in CDA, but also in philosophy and the social sciences. While postmodernists claim that truth is always relative and while Berger and others maintain that reality is socially constructed through discourse, many in CDA assert the existence of a determining, underlying reality with underlying truths, separate from discourse. This view, which I share, is commonly called new realism or critical realism (Cf. Wetherell, “Debates in Discourse Research,” 393).

assumptions and their specific procedures for knowledge production.”⁵³

CDA emerged in the early 1990s as a subform of Discourse Analysis. The interdisciplinary approach, however, is not yet a full-fledged theory or a homogeneous method, “but at most a shared perspective”⁵⁴ or “a cluster of approaches with a similar theoretical base and similar research questions.”⁵⁵ Some scholars go so far as to merely subsume CDA under various theories like constructionism⁵⁶ or call it “nothing more than a deconstructive reading”⁵⁷ of a text. Thus, CDA cannot be exactly pinpointed: it is an idea, a theory in flux, which remains blurry to a certain extent. Nevertheless, some key features as well as a basic definition of CDA can certainly be formulated. Drawing heavily on critical linguistics and the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, Pierre Bourdieu, and especially the conceptions of Jürgen Habermas and Michel Foucault regarding the relationship between language, ideology and domination, the network of CDA scholars started to develop a common basic framework.⁵⁸ In contrast to discourse analysis, the main concern of critical discourse analysis is not just words but what people do with words. CDA goes beyond a mere description of linguistic features of texts and instead focuses on a critical examination of how language and discourse are influenced by power relations and competing ideologies.⁵⁹ “In other words, language is taken to be not simply a tool for description and a medium of communication [...], but as a social practice, as a way of doing things. It is a central and constitutive feature of social life.”⁶⁰

Consequently, one also has to consider the context, the social, political, and cultural environment in which a given text was produced, because “one way of enacting power is to control context.”⁶¹ Thus, contrary to more traditional or mainstream methods of discourse analysis, adherents of CDA argue that “all discourses are historic.”⁶² Only by looking at the broader discursive settings and mechanisms can texts be fully interpreted, can social life be explained, can hidden motivations and implied meanings be uncovered, since there is no “discourse-independent reality.”⁶³ The scholar

⁵³ Marianne W. Jorgensen, “Reflexivity and the Doubles of Modern Man: The Discursive Construction of Anthropological Subject Positions,” *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity*, eds. Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 67.

⁵⁴ Quoted in: Wood and Kroger 207.

⁵⁵ ⁵⁵ Michael Meyer, “Between theory, method, and politics: positioning of the approaches to CDA,” *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, eds. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 23.

⁵⁶ Cf. Jonathan Potter, *Discourse Analysis and Constructionist Approaches: Theoretical Background*, <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/ss/depstaff/staff/bio/JPPages/Richardson%20Hand-book%20Chapter%20for%20web.htm>.

⁵⁷ Ruth Palmquist, *Discourse Analysis*, <http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~palmquis/courses/discourse.htm>.

⁵⁸ Cf. Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak, “Introduction: Theory, Interdisciplinarity and Critical Discourse Analysis,” *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity*, eds. Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak (London: Palgrave/MacMillan, 2003) 6f. Once again, elaborating on the specific theories of Habermas and Foucault and their influence on CDA would go beyond the scope of this paper.

⁵⁹ Cf. Michael Billig, “Critical Discourse Analysis and the Rhetoric of Critique,” *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity*, eds. Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak (London: Palgrave/MacMillan, 2003) 38.

⁶⁰ Wood and Kroger, 4.

⁶¹ Teun van Dijk, “Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis,” *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, eds. Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Tayler and Simeon J. Yates (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 303.

⁶² Meyer, 15.

⁶³ Wood and Kroger, 4.

employing CDA then shifts his attention from “what ‘really’ happened to how [...] events are discursively constructed,”⁶⁴ from language and talk as neutral entities in themselves to the phenomena – for example, racism, dominance, truth, and, yes, the culture wars – they help to construct. Hence, in the final analysis, CDA aims at discovering what Noel Heather calls the “discursive practices” of a society, which can be defined as the underlying structures and mechanisms that, in combination with the ideologies and worldviews involved, ultimately produce the aforementioned phenomena.⁶⁵ Finally, with its emphasis on context and frames of references within social systems, CDA assumes that player and structure are mutually constitutive. Consequently, “[d]iscursive practices should always be regarded as both structuring and structured actions.”⁶⁶

2.1.1. From Strands to Fragments: Text and Discourse

All events have discursive roots.

—Siegfried Jäger⁶⁷

The focus of CDA, unlike in discourse analysis and other linguistic methods and theories, is on written texts, not speech acts and transcripts of recorded conversations. The object of a CDA case study then might be a media discourse, policy statements, blog entries, and even political newspaper cartoons.⁶⁸ CDA does not distinguish between the quality of texts: Whether it is an Op-Ed in the *New York Times* or a column in the *Las Cruces Sun News*, CDA emphasizes that all sorts of text may be equally important since they all can eventually be useful in the exploration of power relations, world construction, or forms of dominance.⁶⁹ In addition to the amplitude of possible sources, there is also no specific way of collecting data in the vast majority of CDA approaches. Instead, CDA scholars often analyze a few chosen texts, form particular concepts and categories, and then go on to collect further data in search of texts that support or refute their findings. Hence, while many authors focus on mass media coverage to study different discourses, they only conduct a qualitative examination of the available data and neglect quantitative aspects in their case studies.⁷⁰ Since a complete analysis of a large corpus of text is almost impossible, I will follow the lead and concentrate on a few chosen texts from which I will draw conclusions for the broader discourse.

Following Foucault, discourse can be broadly understood as a group of statements, both text and talk, which produce knowledge and meaning or rather a way of representing knowledge and generating meaning about a particular topic at a certain point of history, and secondly as a concept that incorporates both language and social practice.⁷¹ However, various sub-discourses or even coun-

⁶⁴ Wood and Kroger, 9.

⁶⁵ Cf. Noel Heather, *Religious Language and Critical Discourse Analysis* (Bern: European Academic Publishers, 2000) 18.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁶⁷ Siegfried Jäger, “Discourse and knowledge: Theoretical and methodological aspects of a critical discourse and dispositive analysis,” *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, eds. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 32.

⁶⁸ Wood and Kroger, 23.

⁶⁹ Cf. Heather, 18.

⁷⁰ Meyer, 23f.

⁷¹ Cf. Stuart Hall, “Power, Knowledge and Discourse,” *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, ed. Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Tayler and Simeon J. Yates (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 72.

terdiscourses on a particular topic may form, though they often overlap and interrelate with the meta-discourse. Additionally, certain discourses might be confined to specific in-groups and then exist and are carried out autonomously from the macro-discourse – and “[b]ecause discourse, use of language, is action, different discourses constitute the world differently.”⁷²

Jäger, advancing and building on Foucault’s structuralist notion of discourse, has come up with a very detailed overview of the structure and different units of discourse.⁷³ He calls the basic units of a discourse not texts but “discourse fragments,” which in his model are either texts or more specifically the part of a text dealing with a particular theme relevant to the macro topic of the discourse. The multitude of discursive fragments then accumulate the larger entity of *discourse strands*, which Jäger defines as “[t]hematically uniform discourse processes,”⁷⁴ each of which has both a synchronic dimension, which is most often the primary object of CDA, and a diachronic or historical dimension used to contextualize the rather finite and qualitative range of the former. Jäger also elaborates on the “entanglements of discourse strands”⁷⁵ and notes that a given text can contain a variety of discourse fragments that refer to or are part of various discourse topics, both on a micro- and macro-level. I have already defined and commented on Jäger’s next structural component, the “discourse context,” in length in the preceding lines. Furthermore, Jäger distinguishes between discursive and non-discursive events. While “[a]ll events have discursive roots,”⁷⁶ Jäger terms as “discursive events” only events that “are especially emphasized politically, that is as a general rule by the media.”⁷⁷ These events often exercise a considerable influence on the respective broader discourse strand and can even be turned into a “media-discursive mega event”⁷⁸ by the mass media and other activist players such as politicians. In my opinion, both the discourse about culture wars and the Intelligent Design controversy fit that description. Discourse events and strands are both part of various “discourse planes,” which I initially referred to as discourse levels in the introduction of this work. These discourse planes comprise various “societal locations from which ‘speaking’ happens”:⁷⁹ science or the sciences, politics, media, everyday life, and so forth. Discourse planes also overlap, interact with, and determine one another. Discourse fragments from everyday discourse thus can become part of the mass media discourse and mix with discourse fragments from the discourse of science, and then – refocused and repackaged – trickle back into the discourse of everyday life. Finally, “discourse position” denotes the ideological location from which participants in a particular discourse assess their own position, from which they act, from which they categorize

⁷² Hugh Mehan, “The Construction of an LD Student: A Case Study in the Politics of Representation,” *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, ed. Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Tayler and Simeon J. Yates (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 360. Cf. also Ruth Wodak, “The discourse-historical approach,” *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, eds. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 66f.

⁷³ My following remarks on discourse and structure are thus based on Jäger 46ff.

⁷⁴ Jäger, 47.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 48.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 49.

others, from which they interpret discursive events. According to Jäger, societies usually have a general and shared basic knowledge concerning the ideological locations of most players, but only the various discourse analyses can fully reveal the discourse positions of individuals and groups. All discourse strands ultimately form and are enmeshed in the overall societal discourse.

2.1.2. The Toolbox of CDA

Newcomers to discourse analysis are often disconcerted to find that there is not just one but many varieties of discourse analysis.
—Linda A. Wood and Rolf O. Kroger, *Doing Discourse Analysis*⁸⁰

CDA is not only marked by the interplay of various disciplines and methods, but also by a multiplicity of approaches. Wodak and Fairclough, for example, have identified eight different theoretical varieties of CDA: critical linguistics, French discourse analysis, sociocultural change in discourse, socio-cognitive studies, social semiotics, reading analysis, the Duisberg School, and the discourse-historical method.⁸¹ Many of the case studies conducted under the banner of CDA do not explicitly follow one of the aforementioned approaches, which is no surprise given its theoretical vagueness and developing nature, and instead take advantage of the methodical freedom that is thus possible. Though I will also not explicitly adhere to one of the particular CDA approaches in the case study of this work, I will still turn to Siegfried Jäger's "little toolbox for conducting discourse analyses"⁸² and to Wodak's discourse-historical approach for an orientation on how to proceed with my subsequent analysis of the Intelligent Design controversy – and on how to answer the major research questions of CDA: how discourse maintains, creates, or challenges power relations, how discourse constitutes knowledge and reality, identity and truth, how access to discourse or communication is regulated.⁸³

Based on his structural model of discourse, Jäger developed what he calls a toolbox for critically analyzing discourses.⁸⁴ The first step is the selection of the object/discourse to be scrutinized, followed by a definition and description of the different discourse planes (science, mass media, etc.) and relevant discourse strands. The next step is the "fine analysis of discourse fragments," meaning the in-depth examination of the particular news article or series of articles published in one medium: the themes/topics covered by the text have to be addressed, the context has to be introduced, and the rhetorical means used have to be examined. At this point, the researchers have a myriad of options of rhetorical means they can concentrate on, including the analysis of the different argumentation strategies, of clichés, of specific vocabulary and certain buzzwords, of pronouns, of metaphors and implicit meanings, or of references to the sciences or authoritative sources of knowledge.

The analysis of the rhetorical means is a necessary prerequisite for the uncovering of the discursive strategies. According to Meyer, discursive strategies broadly include referential strategies or strategies of nomination, which aim to label or categorize the different players or groups involved in

⁸⁰ Wood and Kroger, 18.

⁸¹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 205f.

⁸² Jäger, 52.

⁸³ Cf. Wood and Kroger, 207.

⁸⁴ The following paragraph will be based on Jäger 52-56.

a discourse, using linguistic devices such as metaphors in order to gain the upper hand in the struggle for the power of definition.⁸⁵ Strategies of predication, on the other hand, are marked by “stereotypical, evaluative attributions of positive or negative traits and implicit or explicit predicates.”⁸⁶ Another object of investigation can be strategies of argumentation which attempt to justify inclusion or exclusion, thus trying to create or strengthen the cohesion of in-groups and establishing a border to specific out-groups. Finally, “strategies of perspectivation, framing or discourse representations” are used to put events, texts, and utterances into particular contexts.⁸⁷ Returning to Jäger, shedding light on the discursive strategies inherent in texts enables the CDA scholar to evaluate the discourse positions and hence expose the ideological location and the intentions of the actors. In the conclusive step, the text has to be localized in the broader discourse strand and the findings from various texts have to be combined in order to make statements about the superordinate discourse plane.

Wodak follows Jäger’s procedural method. Yet, her discourse-historical approach focuses on the integration of a “large quantity of available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields”⁸⁸ relevant to the discourse under scrutiny.

2.1.3. Power, Ideology, Knowledge: CDA and Cultural Conflict

Language is also a medium of domination and social power. It serves to legitimate relationships of organized force. Insofar as legitimations do not articulate the power relationship whose institutionalization they make possible, insofar as that relationship is merely manifested in the legitimations, language is also ideological.
—Jürgen Habermas, *On the Logic of the Social Sciences*⁸⁹

As noted before, language and discourse are instruments of power and function, figuratively speaking, both as the mortar and the raw material of the building blocks – ideology, religion, knowledge, culture, etc. – used as the foundation for the construction of the building of social reality. Thus, now that the basic structure of discourse and the methodical toolbox have been introduced, I will conclude my presentation of CDA with a discussion of what Wodak regards as the interrelated cornerstones of critical discourse analysis: power, ideology, and knowledge.⁹⁰

2.1.3.1. Discourse and Power

It is the problem which determines nearly all of my books: how in occidental societies is the production of discourses, which (at least for a certain time) are equipped with a truth value, linked to different power mechanisms and institutions.
—Michel Foucault⁹¹

Human societies are marked by constant social struggles over how things are to be understood, by competing worldviews, by adverse groups mobilizing meanings and vying for societal, political, and cultural power. Hence, power relations and issues of social dominance and control as well as their reproduction through texts and discourse are ultimately at the heart of cultural conflict – and at the

⁸⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 27.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Wodak, “The discourse-historical approach,” 65.

⁸⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *On the Logic of the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1988) 172.

⁹⁰ Cf. Wodak, “What CDA is about – a summary of its history, important concepts and its development,” 9f.

⁹¹ Quoted in: Jäger 36.

center of attention of CDA, which focuses “on social (between groups) rather than on personal power and on both the abuse and challenge of power.”⁹² Adhering to a conception of power as developed by Foucault, scholars of CDA acknowledge that the category of power is associated with knowledge, ideas, cultural leadership and authority, or economic constraint.⁹³ Thus, power involves much more than physical coercion or, at a lesser scale, the threat of the use of coercive force. Rather, the “power to mark, assign and classify”⁹⁴ through language, which “indexes power, expresses power, is involved where there is a contention over and a challenge to power,”⁹⁵ is at the heart of critical discourse analyses:

Power, it seems, has to be understood here, not only in terms of economic exploitation and physical coercion, but also in broader cultural or symbolic terms, including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way – within a certain ‘regime of representation’. It includes the exercise of symbolic power through representational practices.⁹⁶

In modern societies then, power is maintained, exercised, and enforced through communication. This kind of power is mainly cognitive, persuasive, manipulative, subliminally or overtly influential – “managing the minds of others is essentially a function of text and talk.”⁹⁷

Societies consist of different social groups, who may clash and feud with each other, coexist peacefully, or barely have any points of contact, “each with its own realities, experiences and even cultures.”⁹⁸ According to Grossberg, society is maintained by the effort of dominant social groups and cultural elites to form a consensus that also incorporates subordinate groups in order to legitimize and uphold their preferred version of socially constructed reality and the corresponding power relations.⁹⁹ To support their position of dominance, these actors use their considerable “symbolic power,” their ability to create meaning and “their discursive and communicative scope and resources,”¹⁰⁰ for example by exercising their control of context and of the access to discourse via the institutions of mass media. The result is that “some ‘voices’ are thereby censored, some opinions are not heard, some perspectives ignored: the discourse itself becomes a ‘segregated’ structure.”¹⁰¹ Powerless or less powerful groups then often face “modes of exclusion” designed to keep them and their opinions in a state of marginalization and they have to struggle for their voices to be heard in the public sphere.¹⁰² Thus, groups with different degrees of social power are hardly ever striving for a real social consensus marked by equality of power, which nonetheless would also be a state marked by forms of social dominance and control, but are aiming at a more or less forced consen-

⁹² Wood and Kroger, 207.

⁹³ Cf. Stuart Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’,” *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, ed. Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Tayler and Simeon J. Yates (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 339.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 338.

⁹⁵ Weiss and Wodak, 15.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Van Dijk, 302.

^{98,99} Lawrence Grossberg, *we gotta get out of this place. Popular conservatism and postmodern culture* (Routledge, New York, 1992) 90.

⁹⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 90f.

¹⁰⁰ van Dijk, “Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis,” 303.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 304.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

sus, a consensus on their own terms, in which they attempt to impose their worldview, their ways of making sense, their beliefs, values, and truths, their own specific culture, and ultimately their aspirations of social reality on other, often directly competing social groups. Though “[t]he majority of people, living in subordinate political positions, generally accept their oppression because they are living in someone else’s ideological universe,”¹⁰³ socially constructed realities sustained by powerful elites and dominant social groups are under a constant threat by what sociologist Peter Berger terms “lurking ‘irrealities’,”¹⁰⁴ by alternative systems of meaning and knowing, by counterhegemonic worldviews constructed by competing social groups who “struggle to establish a new and different consensus.”¹⁰⁵ If powerful and resourceful enough, these groups can successfully engage the ruling social and cultural elites in a battle for cultural hegemony, a state of struggle in which any remainder of a (preexisting) societal consensus might vanish for a certain period of time until one group is able to establish a consensus again. The concept of cultural hegemony used in CDA and the social sciences in general goes back to the Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci, who stated that dominant social groups generally use not coercion but their soft power, their “cultural institutions such as schools, political parties and the media”¹⁰⁶ to create a seemingly natural version of reality that serves their interests. Additionally, his theory underlined that society is in an ongoing state of struggle, since “[h]egemony is readjusted and re-negotiated constantly”¹⁰⁷ and the “rearticulation of the social and cultural landscape is never a single battle.”¹⁰⁸ Rather, societies are usually marked by “a continuous ‘war of positions’ dispersed across the entire terrain of social and cultural life,”¹⁰⁹ which Gramsci juxtaposes with the “war of manoeuvre,” a strategy that proposes a direct attack to win quickly but that is less suited for cultural and ideological conflicts in well-established societies.¹¹⁰

2.1.3.2.Discourse and Ideology

If we say we have no ideologies [...] we deny truth. If we say our language contains no biases, we are refusing to see reality.
—Robert Wuthnow, *Christianity and Civil Society*¹¹¹

The different methods and linguistic devices presented in the preceding section equip the discourse analyst with tools to analyze the different ways people and more specifically social groups use language and various discursive strategies in order to establish a firm hold on societal power. However, for a critical examination and full evaluation of cultural conflicts, it is inevitable to go one step further and address the question of why language is used in a particular way in order to uncover the underlying aims and interests of participants in a given discourse. Here, the notion of ideology en-

¹⁰³ Grossberg, 91.

¹⁰⁴ Berger, 24.

¹⁰⁵ Grossberg, 91.

¹⁰⁶ Tara Kachgal, “Cultural Hegemony Theory,” http://www.unc.edu/courses/2000fall/jomc245-001/cultural_hegemony.html.

¹⁰⁷ Monica Stillo, “Antonio Gramsci. Concept of Hegemony”, <http://www.theory.org.uk/ctr-gram.htm>.

¹⁰⁸ Grossberg, 251.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Stillo.

¹¹¹ Wuthnow, Robert, *Christianity and Civil Society. The Contemporary Debate* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996) 67.

ters the work of critical discourse analysts – as a catalyst for discursive actions and as a way of legitimizing claims to power, as a phenomenon that both influences and is influenced by discourse, the same way in which “discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned.”¹¹² Though “language is also ideological”¹¹³ and “[d]iscourse does ideological work,”¹¹⁴ the ideological motivations of social groups remain buried under the structures of dominance, where “the effects of power and ideology in the production of meaning are obscured and acquire stable and natural forms: they are taken as ‘given’.”¹¹⁵ Helping to sustain the stability of dominance and power are so-called ideological codes, which work in an indirect manner and are self-reproducing once established. These codes – “secular” and “fundamentalist,” or “liberal” and conservative” – “operate as a free-floating form of control in the relations of public discourse”¹¹⁶ and “organize talk, thinking, writing, and the kinds of images and stories reproduced on film and television” and are all part of a superior ideological master frame, which in turn allows to connect seemingly disparate events and to interpret them as part of a larger scheme.¹¹⁷ Counterhegemonic discourses, also motivated by competing ideological worldviews, can only aim to break these stable and naturalized taken-for-granted conventions that rule the discursive practices of a society.¹¹⁸ Consequently, considering that “[i]deology is seen [by CDA] as an important means of establishing and maintaining unequal power relations,”¹¹⁹ CDA aims “to ‘demystify’ discourses by deciphering ideologies.”¹²⁰ Marxism regarded ideology as a distorted view of reality that legitimized, justified, and maintained prevailing power structures within a society and the rule of dominating classes¹²¹ – a view that found an echo in the assumptions of critical discourse analysts about society and power.

In modern social sciences, “the study of ideology is a study of ‘the ways in which meaning is constructed and conveyed by symbolic forms of various kinds’.”¹²² Van Dijk states that:

...ideologies are the fundamental social cognitions that reflect the basic aims, interests and values of groups. They may (metaphorically and hence vaguely) be seen as the fundamental cognitive ‘programmes’ or ‘operating systems’ that organize and monitor the more specific social attitudes of groups and their members.¹²³

Finally and more simply, Andrew Vincent’s understanding of ideology can be best described with the German term “Weltanschauung,” meaning the worldview of different social groups. Hence, ideologies are the basic mental belief systems which people construct to give meaning to their actions

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Habermas, 172.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Wodak, “What CDA is about – a summary of its history, important concepts and its development,” 3.

¹¹⁶ Dorothy E. Smith, “Politically Correct: An Ideological Code,” *Political Correctness: Toward the Inclusive University*, eds. Stephen Richer and Lorna Weir (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995) 27.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Ariane Manske, *Political Correctness und Normalität. Die amerikanische PC-Kontroverse im kulturgeschichtlichen Kontext* (Heidelberg: Synchron – Wissenschaftsverlag der Autoren, 2002) 241f.

¹¹⁸ Cf. ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 14.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Cf. Vincent, 5f.

¹²² Wodak, “What CDA is about – a summary of its history, important concepts and its development,” 10.

¹²³ Quoted in Heather, 35.

(and reactions), which they use as guidelines to distinguish between right and wrong, which they regard as the truth on how the world has to be understood and how society should be organized.¹²⁴ Furthermore, ideologies, like the related and overlapping concepts of language and religion, create communities, “imagined communities of ‘us’,”¹²⁵ but they can also divide communities. Ideology-based “imagined communities” are very successful in gathering its members around certain symbols and values and are thus important factors for self-identification.

Over the years, the demise of ideologies has been proclaimed repeatedly, going back to Daniel Bell’s book *The End of Ideology* (1960), in which the author stated that ideological cleavages in Western democracies were diminishing. Bell based his assumptions on his observation of a consensus on basic economic as well as political issues, such as the unquestionable acceptance of a democratic organization of Western states.¹²⁶ Yet, “new types of postmaterial issues were polarizing Western publics,”¹²⁷ revealing ideological splits along cultural, social and religious lines. Consequently, the mattering maps of everyday life have been restructured and, with regard to the situation in the United States, many perceive “a continental drift toward cultural divide between two opposing ideological camps.”¹²⁸ Conflicts about issues such as gay marriage, abortion, and the teaching of Intelligent Design are thus seen as ideologically based clashes between social groups, in which “the replacement of argument and fact with a narrative [...] becomes increasingly conventionalized and naturalized through repetition.”¹²⁹ Since deciphering the underlying ideologies is one of the main objects of investigation of CDA, I will elaborate on some of the perceived and projected ideologies at play in the culture wars and the Intelligent Design controversy in my subsequent analysis: secular humanism, Darwinism, scientism, Evangelicalism, Christian fundamentalism. Though the warring camps in social struggles often hastily accuse and denounce their opponents of being dogmatic ideologists who adhere to one of the aforementioned -isms, the accused and members of specific social groups in general deny that ideology has any influence on their actions and discursive behavior – or at least they play down the role of ideology – and instead like to think of themselves as discussants who are guided solely by rationality and common sense. Christian religion, which Marx

¹²⁴ Vincent, 16f.

¹²⁵ Scatamburlo, Valerie L., *Soldiers of Misfortune. The New Right’s Culture War and the Politics of Political Correctness* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1998) 8. The concept of “imagined communities” however was developed by Benedict Anderson. In his book of the same title, Anderson exemplifies nations as a type of imagined community, “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion... In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined” (Benedict Anderson, “Imagined Communities,” Extracts from Introduction, <http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/irvinem/CCT510/Sources/Anderson-extract.html>). Nations, like religions and ideologies, are social constructs created and sustained through discourse and collective symbols, thus groups that organize around ideologies can be also be regarded as ‘imagined communities’.

¹²⁶ Cf. Russell J. Dalton, *Social Modernization and the End of Ideology Debate: Patterns of Ideological Polarization*, <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~rdalton/archive/jjps06.pdf>.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Marsden, 282. Cf. also Grossberg, 283.

¹²⁹ Jim Neilson, “The Great PC Scare. Tyrannies of the Left, Rhetoric of the Right,” *PC Wars. Politics and Theory in the Academy*, ed. Jeffrey Williams (New York: Routledge, 1995) 83.

already labeled a dominant ideology¹³⁰ and which van Dijk calls “ideological group belief,”¹³¹ will be subsumed under the category of ideology in this work. Though some social scientists reject this view, both can Christian religion and ideology can be defined as mental belief systems consisting of a specific set of values and beliefs, with ideology certainly being the broader concept. Thus, all religions can be categorized as ideologies, yet not all ideologies are religions. Furthermore, Adorno and Marcuse of the *Frankfurt School* argued that religion had been transformed into nothing more than a substantial part of the ideologies of social groups since the specific religious elements had been neutralized and the religious context within a society had dissolved, while Horkheimer distinguished “between ‘good’ religion as a place for human hope and desire, and ‘bad’ religion as ideology of control.”¹³² Accordingly, my focus on religion, in particular on Christianity in the United States, is on “bad religion,” since religion rarely enters the public sphere as a pure concept outside of an ideological framework, at least not in the context of the culture wars, but instead is almost always mixed with or part of various ideologies, forming the aforementioned “intellectual hybrids”¹³³ like “liberal Christians” or the “Religious Right.”

Finally, it also has to be noted that, as Philip Converse has shown in his influential and widely regarded book *The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics* (1964), the great majority of people does not have a distinct and full set of beliefs and thus a clear ideology. His key finding is that though elites and their members often have fixed ideologies, they are clearly in the minority. Converse estimates that only ten percent of the US population can be considered as what he deems “ideologues.”¹³⁴ While this number is certainly up for debate, I will address this question in more detail during my discussion of the American culture wars.

2.1.3.3. Discourse and Knowledge

Where knowledge is weakened, power can be weakened.

—Siegfried Jäger¹³⁵

Knowledge is another complex phenomenon at the heart of CDA which aims to decipher the relationship between knowledge, discourse, and power by looking at how knowledge evolves, how it is communicated and passed on, and what function it has in society.¹³⁶ With regard to CDA, Jäger defines knowledge as “all kinds of contents which make up a consciousness and/or all kinds of

¹³⁰ Like ideologies, Marx regarded religion as a social construct, as a tool used by those in power to keep the lower classes in their place. Marxism maintained that in order to establish a truly free society, the dominant ideology of religions needs to be abolished. Cf. William H. Swatos Jr. (ed.), “Marx, Karl,” *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society*, <http://hirr.hartsem.edu/ency/Marx.htm>.

¹³¹ Teun van Dijk, “Multidisciplinary CDA: a plea for diversity,” *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, eds. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (London: Sage Publications, 2001) 114.

¹³² Ingo Mörtz, *The Sociology of Religion as Critical Theory*, <http://soziologie.soz.uni-linz.ac.at/sozthe/staff/moerthpub/CriticalTheory.pdf>.

¹³³ Vincent, 18.

¹³⁴ Louis Menand, “The Unpolitical Animal. How Political Science Understands Voters,” *The New Yorker* 30 Aug. 2004, http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/08/30/040830_crat_atlarge.

¹³⁵ Jäger, 61.

¹³⁶ Teun van Dijk, “The Discourse-Knowledge Interface,” *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity*, eds. Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak (London: Pgrave/ MacMillan, 2003) 85. Cf. also Jäger, 33.

meanings used by respective historical persons to interpret and shape the surrounding reality.”¹³⁷ While Jäger only mentions the knowledge of everyday life and the particular knowledge of the sciences,¹³⁸ van Dijk distinguishes between three types of knowledge: personal knowledge, which “is represented in mental models about specific, personal events;”¹³⁹ group knowledge shared by particular social groups such as scientists or members of a given religion, which might be “biased and ideological and not recognized as knowledge by other groups at all but characterized as mere belief; and finally cultural knowledge which pertains to the basic knowledge shared by a collective society or culture such as a common language that creates the foundation for societal discourse.”¹⁴⁰ While van Dijk’s categories focus on actors and groups, Gouveia, on the other, hand emphasizes the content or form of knowledge in his classification, as he distinguishes between scientific knowledge, common sense, and the knowledge of the humanities.¹⁴¹ Critical discourse analysts generally focus on the level of group knowledge, since “knowledge may be a power resource, that is, the ‘symbolic capital’ of specific groups”¹⁴² which is “expressed, conveyed, accepted and shared in discourse.”¹⁴³ Knowledge is thus another social construct that serves as a stabilizer for structures of dominance and social control in societies as well as a legitimization for existing (unequal) power structures and the way the world is explained and interpreted.¹⁴⁴ Consequently, according to Hall, “[k]nowledge linked to power not only assumes the authority of ‘the truth’ but has the power to *make itself true* [italics original].”¹⁴⁵ Once dominant groups can exercise this power, they are able to establish what Foucault called a “regime of truth,”¹⁴⁶ that is “the types of discourse it [society] accepts and makes functions as true, the mechanisms [...] which enable one to distinguish true and false statements”¹⁴⁷ and which are “true” only for a certain historical context.

In the process of challenging power, subordinate or competing social groups are attacking the constructed “objective knowledge” which claims intra-societal “truth-status.” Here, not only different groups clash, but also the different forms of knowledge as defined by Gouveia. He argues that in Western societies, scientific knowledge is generally accepted as “the only true form of knowledge,”¹⁴⁸ since both common sense and the knowledge of the humanities were labeled as non-scientific and non-objective.¹⁴⁹ The battle over the authority of science is a common characteristic in the context of the American culture wars, especially with regard to the Intelligent Design contro-

¹³⁷ Jäger, 33.

¹³⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

¹³⁹ Van Dijk, “Multidisciplinary CDA: a plea for diversity,” 114.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Cf. Carlos A.M. Gouveia, “Critical Discourse Analysis and the Development of the New Science,” *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity*, eds. Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 48.

¹⁴² Van Dijk “The Discourse-Knowledge Interface,” 86.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Berger, 29.

¹⁴⁵ Hall, “Power, Knowledge, and Discourse,” 76.

¹⁴⁶ Quoted in: *ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ Gouveia, 48.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

versy, where the particular knowledge of science, which, due to its complexity, separates society in a few groups who have participant knowledge and a majority who has only outsider knowledge in the scientific discourse, is challenged by what Jäger calls “everyday knowledge”¹⁵⁰ and the group knowledge of, for example, particular Christian groups, who, though inadvertently, question the objectivity of scientists in the best tradition of postmodernism.¹⁵¹ Thus, though the scientific community and its backers argue “that science deals with *knowledge* about the natural world, whereas religion is simply a system of *belief* [italics original], based on faith,”¹⁵² science in turn is labeled as a mere belief system based on secular ideologies while religious belief can be transformed into valid ‘objective’ knowledge of the world. However, the question of whether extra-scientific social knowledge should be allowed as an argumentative basis in the public sphere has been at the center of the culture wars debate in the United States from the beginning. Liberal theory as based on the writings of Locke and Mill maintains that religion is a private matter and should thus not be invoked in the public square, an idea that has found its institutionalization of the separation of church and state in the United States.¹⁵³ Yet, in 1984, Richard John Neuhaus, a Catholic Reverend, published his influential book *The Naked Public Square*, criticizing the creeping but powerful progress of secularization which led to an increasing hostility towards religion in the public sphere: “We insist that we are a democratic society, yet we have [...] excluded from policy considerations the operative values of the American people, values that are overwhelmingly grounded in religious belief.”¹⁵⁴ Encouraged by the ongoing resurgence of religion in the United States which started in the 1980s and what de Vries calls the “deprivatization of modern religion,”¹⁵⁵ conservative Christian groups have demanded “a place at the table in the conversation we call democracy,”¹⁵⁶ arguing that their religious beliefs are

¹⁵⁰ Jäger, 33.

¹⁵¹ Postmodernism, among other things, is marked by a “refusal to regard positivistic, rationalistic, instrumental criteria as the sole or exclusive standard of worthwhile knowledge” (Cf. Steve Bruce, *God is Dead. Secularization in the West*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002; 229). It has to be noted, though, that the critics of scientific knowledge, for example in the case of Intelligent Design, certainly do not deny the existence of underlying truths and objective knowledge. However, they locate this knowledge in their own social group and thus regard religious claims to knowledge and truth at least as equally valid as scientific claims to knowledge. In opposition to the ideas of postmodernism, many critical discourse analysts also believe in the existence of underlying truths and determining underlying realities separate from the discursively constructed social realities. According to Bashkar, there are two kinds of objects or phenomena: constructed objects that are social and historical products on which discourse scholars most frequently focus, and objects which are not produced by people, on which natural scientists try to gain more knowledge. This distinction is part of the theory of new realism or critical realism (Cf. Wetherell, “Debates in Discourse Research,” 393). For my own work, the question of objectivity is of course also of importance. Though I try to be as objective as possible, my mental belief systems will hinder me to produce a fully objective and impartial analysis and CDA argues that an analysis is always an interpretation. Some critical discourse analysts even go so far as to reexamine their own analysis to expose the degree of construction inherent in academic works.

¹⁵² Stephen L. Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief. How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion* (New York: Basic Books, 1993) 217.

¹⁵³ Cf. Mertin, 46f.

¹⁵⁴ Richard John Neuhaus, *The Naked Public Square. Religion and Democracy in America* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1984) 37.

¹⁵⁵ De Vries, 16-17.

¹⁵⁶ Ralph Reed, then executive director of the Christian Coalition. Quoted in: Katja Mertin, *Zwischen Anpassung und Konfrontation. Die Religiöse Rechte in der amerikanischen Politik* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2004) 154.

inalienably bound to their discursive conduct in the public sphere.¹⁵⁷ However, Stephen Carter notes that in actuality, the “battle for the public square is already over. The rhetoric of religion is simply *there* [italics original]”¹⁵⁸

Since knowledge, interplaying with power and ideology, represents the very basis of culture and society and thus is “among the major symbolic power resources of contemporary society,”¹⁵⁹ the critical discourse analyst has to identify both the different types of knowledge involved in the issue or social struggle under investigation and the key social groups which define the criteria on which knowledge is legitimized as well as the groups who challenge a given “regime of truth.”¹⁶⁰

2.2. Multidisciplinary Methods: CDA and the ‘Others’

CDA can be conducted in, and combined with any approach and subdiscipline in the humanities and the social sciences.
—Teun van Dijk¹⁶¹

Although the basic idea or framework of CDA, as laid out in the preceding paragraphs, can certainly be enunciated, there is still no uniform theory formation but instead several different approaches. Yet, this theoretical and conceptual vagueness is not necessarily seen as a weakness by CDA practitioners. On the contrary, the plurality of academic disciplines, the interplay of different methods, and the dialogue between social and linguistic theories is seen as one of the strengths of CDA, since only their combination could sufficiently explain the intricate interrelation between discourse and society.¹⁶² Furthermore, acknowledging van Dijk's remarks that “CDA does not provide a ready-made, how-to-do approach to social analysis”¹⁶³ and that it can be “combined with any approach and subdiscipline in the humanities and the social sciences,”¹⁶⁴ my analysis will certainly be eclectic as I will integrate different approaches and theories that will prove to be useful in examining and explaining the discourse on the American culture wars and particularly the ID controversy.

2.2.1. Frame Analysis: Who framed God and Darwin?

Framing is both powerful and also elegant in its simplicity for explaining situations and events.
—Noel Heather¹⁶⁵

Frame analysis or framing is a method commonly used in various academic disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, sociology, or communication theory. However, like CDA, frame analysis “is neither a full-fledged theoretical paradigm, nor a coherent methodological approach,”¹⁶⁶ but a num-

¹⁵⁷ Cf. E.J. Dionne Jr., “Foreword,” *Religion Returns to the Public Square: Faith and Policy in America*, eds. Hugh Heclo and Wilfred M. McClay (Washington D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2003) xi.

¹⁵⁸ Carter, 101.

¹⁵⁹ Van Dijk, “The Discourse-Knowledge Interface,” 86.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁶¹ Van Dijk, “Multidisciplinary CDA: a plea for diversity,” 96.

¹⁶² Weiss and Wodak (2003), 6f.

¹⁶³ Van Dijk, “Multidisciplinary CDA: a plea for diversity,” 98.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 96.

¹⁶⁵ Heather, 80.

¹⁶⁶ Thomas König, “Frame Analysis: Theoretical Preliminaries,” <http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods/publications/frameanalysis/>.

ber of related methods and approaches for the study of discourse. König defines frames as “basic cognitive structures which guide the perception and representation of reality”¹⁶⁷ and ultimately reproduce meaning, though they are unconsciously adopted in a discursive process and environment. More recently, cognitive linguist George Lakoff has used frames and frame analysis to explain the culture wars and especially the conflict between liberals and conservatives. Lakoff defines frames as “mental structures” that shape goals, plans, actions, or values of individuals and social groups:

You can't see or hear frames. They are part of what cognitive scientists call the “cognitive unconscious” – structures in our brains that we cannot consciously access, but know by their consequences: the way we reason and what counts as common sense. We also know frames through language. All words are defined relative to conceptual frames. When you hear a word, its frame [...] is activated in your brain.¹⁶⁸

Consequently, frame analysis aims at deciphering how particular social groups or the mass media use language, especially metaphors, in order to discursively influence the way events or incidents are interpreted in the overall society.¹⁶⁹ Lakoff notes that, in political and cultural conflicts, “the choice of language is, of course, vital, but it is vital because language evokes frames — moral and conceptual frames.”¹⁷⁰ The specific discursive and lexical way events or messages are therefore framed has a serious impact on how the corresponding public discourse will evolve and proceed. Furthermore, frames have established themselves as a bedrock part of the mental and moral belief systems of people. We think in and act according to frames – and if “the facts do not fit a frame, the frame stays and the facts bounce off.”¹⁷¹ People can and do interpret and categorize events based on their mental frames, even when they only have partial information, making the facts fit their frames. Yet, key- or buzzwords naturally also tend to activate different frames and interpretations within different social groups. Other examples of terms at play in the culture wars, which by their very form already signal what kind of frames their creators aim to evoke, are terms like “pro-life,” “progressive,” or “Moral Majority.” I will not go into a deeper explanation here, but the lexical choice of these terms already indicate the way groups who embellish themselves with these keywords and titles want their opposition to be perceived in public: as “anti-life,” as “backward,” and the “Immoral Minority.” A large part of the literature on frame analysis deals with the role of the mass media “in creating and activating particular frames, and excluding others”¹⁷² and, since these “[f]rames tell an audience how to interpret a message,”¹⁷³ their resulting influence as agenda setters in public discourse. The common use of keywords such as “conservative” or “liberal” in news stories not only activates the corresponding frames, which can be likened to the ideological codes I referred to ear-

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ George Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant: Know your Values and Frame the Debate* (White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing Company, 2004) xv.

¹⁶⁹ George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Conservatives and Liberals Think* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002) 44f.

¹⁷⁰ George Lakoff, “Simple Framing. An introduction to framing and its uses in politics.”

http://www.rockridgeinstitute.org/projects/strategic/simple_framing.

¹⁷¹ Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant*, 17.

¹⁷² Franklin D. Gilliam, Jr. and Susan Nall Bales, “Strategic Frame Analysis: Reframing America's Youth,” *Social Policy Report* Volume XV, Number 3, 2001, 3.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

lier in my discussion on power and ideology, but also activates larger master frames or master narratives.¹⁷⁴ Thus, conflicts about abortion will be swiftly portrayed and interpreted as being part of the overarching theme of the culture wars or, in anticipation of my subsequent case study of the ID controversy, as biologist Kenneth Miller laments, was easily framed by actors from both sides by placing “God and Darwin in direct opposition”¹⁷⁵ because the conflict fits neatly in the master frame of a warfare between science and religion. Additionally, the mass media is regularly criticized of presenting complex problems and conflicts in rather simplistic ways, thereby using a basic either/or scheme or often employing a “Manichean frame of popular culture, which portrays conflicts as simple battles between good and evil.”¹⁷⁶ With regard to CDA, frame analysis thus can be very helpful in exposing the power structures of a society by looking who has the power to frame a specific event, for example through control of sectors of the mass media, as well as the ideological motivations of the actors involved in a particular discourse. The way for subordinate or competing social groups to challenge existing structures of dominance in this model is to reframe important keywords and cultural metaphors with the goal to make the overall discourse fit their own worldview.¹⁷⁷

The distinction between frames and ideology is stressed repeatedly in the literature about frame analysis. Both pertain “to different dimensions of social construction”¹⁷⁸ as “framing points to process, while ideology points to content.”¹⁷⁹ Frames are tools with which people locate events within a wider system of meaning while ideologies circumscribe those systems of meaning or comprehensive systems of belief.¹⁸⁰

2.2.2. “Stereotypes are a Timesaver”¹⁸¹: Self/Other in Discourse

Difference signifies. It ‘speaks’.

—Stuart Hall¹⁸²

In his essay “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’,” Hall rhetorically asks “Why does difference matter?”¹⁸³ He comes up with four answers:

1 “[W]ithout it, meaning could not exist [italics original].”¹⁸⁴ Hall maintains that meaning is relational, that it “is the ‘difference’ between white and black which signifies, which carries meaning.”¹⁸⁵ According to Zygmunt Baumann, binary oppositions like black/white are essential to the construction of

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Manske, 241.

¹⁷⁵ Kenneth Miller, “Darwin’s Pope?” *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, Vol. 22, No. 2, Autumn 2005, http://www.hds.harvard.edu/news/bulletin_mag/articles/33-2_miller.html.

¹⁷⁶ Scatamburlo, 141.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Lakoff, “Simple Framing.”

¹⁷⁸ Pamela E. Oliver, *What a Good Idea! Frames and Ideologies in Social Movement Research*, <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~oliver/PROTESTS/ArticleCopies/Frames.2.29.00.pdf>.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Phrase on a t-shirt by the satirical magazine *The Onion*.

¹⁸² Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’,” 326.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 328.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

social order.¹⁸⁶ Binary oppositions often also tend to be rather reductionist and oversimplified, “swallowing up all distinctions in their rather rigid two-part structure.”¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, as Jacques Derrida pointed out, binary oppositions are not neutral, “[t]here is always a relation of power between the poles of a binary opposition [italics original],”¹⁸⁸ with one of the poles generally being dominant or being regarded as the ‘normal’ one.

2 “[W]e need ‘difference’ because we can only construct meaning through a dialogue with the ‘Other’ [italics original].” Mikhail Bakhtin argued that words are not neutral, that speakers have to adopt the word as one’s own to control the meaning of it, since it has served other people’s intentions before and will continue to do so in the present and in the future. Individuals thus engage in “a struggle over meaning”¹⁸⁹ and meaning therefore is dialogic and can never be fully fixed. The ‘other’ then, like the ‘difference’ in-between binary oppositions, is also essential for establishing meaning.¹⁹⁰

3 “[C]ulture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different positions within a classificatory system [italics original].”¹⁹¹ Social groups use binary oppositions to order and classify the world and consequently to construct meaning and social reality. “The marking of ‘difference’ is thus the basis of that symbolic order which we call culture [italics original].”¹⁹²

4 “[T]he ‘other’ is fundamental to the constitution of the self, to us as subjects.”¹⁹³ Identities, the ‘self’, the ‘us’, are constructed and maintained discursively in a dialogue with their necessary counterpart, with an ‘Other’, with ‘them’. Thus, the interdependence of ‘self’ and ‘other’ as “constructs that are at once implicated in one another’s fabrication and necessary to each other’s moral constitution”¹⁹⁴ causes cultural theorist Lawrence Grossberg to designate what he terms “differentiating machines”¹⁹⁵ as a vital part of and a structure of power in society and culture.¹⁹⁶ According to Grossberg, they are most often concurrently binary machines which “are responsible for the production of the systems of social difference and identities.”¹⁹⁷ The ‘other’ is also used as a screen on which the ‘self’ projects its own wishes, fears, desires, or anger.¹⁹⁸ In the social sciences, complementary projection is understood “as the process of explaining and justifying our own state of mind by referring to the imagined intentions and behavior of others [italics original].”¹⁹⁹ In addition, Ulrich Bielefeld notes that the ‘self’ and the ‘us’ are constituted by processes of demarcation. Individuals and social groups erect boundaries – symbolic, real, imaginary, or a combination of them – to dis-

¹⁸⁶ Armin Nassehi, “Der Fremde als Vertrauter. Soziologische Betrachtungen zur Konstruktion von Identitäten und Differenzen,” *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 47 (1995) 447.

¹⁸⁷ Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’,” 328.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 329.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 329-330.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 330.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ Giles Gunn, “Human Solidarity and the Problem of Otherness,” *Religion and Cultural Studies*, ed. Susan L. Mizruchi (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001) 86.

¹⁹⁵ Grossberg, 103.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 397.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Ulrich Bielefeld, “Das Konzept des Fremden und die Wirklichkeit des Imaginären,” *Das Eigene und das Fremde in der Alten Welt?*, ed. Ulrich Bielefeld (Hamburg: Junius, 1991) 104f.

¹⁹⁹ Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1954) 390.

groups erect boundaries – symbolic, real, imaginary, or a combination of them – to distinguish in-group from out-group identities and to establish and maintain their own.²⁰⁰

The analysis of how ‘self’ and ‘other’, ‘us’ and ‘them’ are constructed between the poles of power, dominance, and resistance, how identities are formed through ideological discourses and language, is one of the key points of investigation for CDA.²⁰¹ Hall asserts that social struggles and cultural conflicts are about the power to capture modes of representation, the power of defining the ‘other’, the “power to mark, assign and classify” and finally “the power to represent someone of something in a certain way – within a certain ‘regime of representation’.”²⁰² Since the “human mind must think with the aid of categories,”²⁰³ social groups use lexical labels in an attempt to categorize and classify ‘self’ and ‘other’, in-group and out-group in a system of binary oppositions. Category in this context is defined as “*an accessible cluster of associated ideas which as a whole has the property of guiding daily adjustments* [italics original].”²⁰⁴ These categories, which, for example, mark inclusion or exclusion, then are the basis for the prejudgment of other social groups and events, which often leads to overcategorization, the process of rushing to make generalizations with only partial knowledge about the ‘other’ at hand.²⁰⁵ Binary oppositions are often applied very rigidly: the difference is enforced while the fluid space in-between them is disregarded. Gordon W. Allport, a psychologist who was one of the first to research prejudices and stereotypes, also observed that “[u]ntil we label an out-group it does not clearly exist in our minds.”²⁰⁶ Labeling then denotes the process of placing a person or a group within a particular category, which is often attributed a negative status.²⁰⁷ Furthermore, due to the reductionist and oversimplified character of many binary oppositions and labels, “[c]omplex, contextually nuanced discussions get summed up in [...] a single word.”²⁰⁸ Hence, lexical labels such as “liberal,” and “conservative,” which Allport calls “labels of primary potency”²⁰⁹ due to their symbolic power and their common function as cultural metaphors, readily invoke desired frames and ideological codes and ultimately predictable interpretations of events. The lexical choice of social groups engaged in an ideological discourse then not surprisingly follows an “overall strategy of ‘positive self-representation and negative other presentation’.”²¹⁰

Stuart Hall regards stereotyping as another key element at play in the battle over power in representation and thus in the construction of ‘us’ versus ‘them’.²¹¹ In the broadest sense, stereotypes “are aids to explanation, [...] energy-saving devices, and [...] shared group beliefs”²¹² associated

²⁰⁰ Cf. Bielefeld, 115.

²⁰¹ Cf. Wodak, “The discourse-historical approach,” 73.

²⁰² Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’,” 338.

²⁰³ Allport, 290.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 171.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 8, 20.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 183.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Sagarin

²⁰⁸ Mehan, 345.

²⁰⁹ Allport, 179.

²¹⁰ Van Dijk, “Multidisciplinary CDA: a plea for diversity,” 103.

²¹¹ Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’,” 338.

²¹² Craig McGarty, Vincent Y. Yzerbyt, and Russell Spears, “Social, cultural and cognitive factors in

with a specific category, which are commonly activated by certain keywords and are signaled by specific labels. From a very basic perspective, a stereotype then can be defined as “a cognitive structure consisting of a category or label, and its corresponding traits.”²¹³ Although positive stereotypes also exist, the process of stereotyping usually describes the attribution of exaggerated and oversimplified negative traits or characteristics to all members of a particular group.²¹⁴ Thus, stereotypes are always to some extent misrepresentations of other groups and therefore “are not so much aids to understanding but aids to misunderstanding.”²¹⁵ Though these group stereotypes are very stable, they are not monolithic and change over time, yet are historically grown collective achievements and thus carry considerable cultural baggage.²¹⁶ Edward Sagarin noted that stereotypes, due to their importance in identity and group construction, are used as mechanisms for social control: They ridicule, exclude, and devalue others and serve to justify the actions of social groups and to maintain the social hierarchy since “the most important and enduring function of stereotypes is to maintain the existing power structure.”²¹⁷ However, in social conflicts, subordinate groups also challenge the status quo by using their own stereotypes and attacking the stereotypes of the powerful in order to change the images they transport.²¹⁸ Furthermore, stressing the difference between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and emphasizing the negative traits of the ‘other’, stereotypes also function as a tool for the creation of in-group cohesion. According to Sumner, social groups often invoke external enemies – real or imagined, artificially created – to connote the impression of a threat or to create a scapegoat, on which and perceived grievances can be blamed.²¹⁹ Scapegoating then carries stereotyping to the extremes as it “involves the creation of a stark ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ dichotomy.”²²⁰

Before I examine how lexical labels, stereotypes, and ideologies interplay in establishing and maintaining power structures with regard to the culture wars and the discourse on ID, I will focus on the question of whether the American culture wars are real or imagined in the next chapter.

stereotype formation,” *Stereotypes as Explanations. The Formation of Meaningful Beliefs about Social Groups*, eds. Craig McGarty, Vincent Y. Yzerbyt, and Russell Spears (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 2.

²¹³ Adam J. Berinsky and Tali Mendelberg, “The Indirect Effects of Discredited Stereotypes: Social and Political Traits in Judgments of Jewish Leaders,” <http://www.princeton.edu/~csdp/research/pdfs/IndEffectsOfDiscredStereotypes.pdf>.

²¹⁴ Cf. Sagarin, 343.

²¹⁵ McGarty, Yzerbyt, and Spears, 4.

²¹⁶ Cf. Berinsky and Mendelberg.

²¹⁷ S. Alexander Haslem, John C. Turner, Penelope J. Oakes, Katherine J. Reynolds and Bertjan Doosje, “From personal pictures in the head to collective tools in the world: how shared stereotypes allow groups to represent and change social reality,” *Stereotypes as Explanations. The Formation of Meaningful Beliefs about Social Groups*, eds. Craig McGarty, Vincent Y. Yzerbyt, and Russell Spears (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 177. Cf. also Sagarin, 343.

²¹⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 180.

²¹⁹ Cf. Sagarin, 399.

²²⁰ Eric Brahm, “Scapegoating,” *Beyond Intractability*, eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess (Boulder: Conflict Research Consortium/University of Colorado, 2004), <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/scapegoating/>.

3. God, Gays, and the Secular Grinch: Welcome to the Culture Wars

I have chosen to jump into the fray and become a warrior in the vicious culture war that is currently under way in the United States of America.
—Bill O'Reilly, *Culture Warrior*²²¹

There is no Culture War in the U.S. – no battle for the soul of America rages, at least none that most Americans are aware of.
—Morris P. Fiorina²²²

[T]he Culture War isn't really a war; it's more a public entertainment, a Culture Circus.
—Joe Klein²²³

The terms "culture wars" and, in the singular, "culture war"²²⁴ have entered the fray as a common explanatory model for various social, cultural, and religious conflicts since sociologist James Davison Hunter introduced the culture war thesis in his book *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* in 1991. Hunter sees an insurmountable cleavage between cultural conservatives/moral traditionalists and cultural progressives/liberals as a result of differing worldviews and moral visions.²²⁵ Yet, from the beginning, his thesis has been widely disputed. Among others, Alan Wolfe claims that only the elites are divided, that only politicians, intellectuals, and the mass media are waging the culture war.²²⁶ In the following, I will address the question of the existence of the culture wars, which serves as the current cultural context of the discourse on Intelligent Design. So, is it the *Disunited States of America*²²⁷ or rather *One Nation, After All*?

3.1. Dispatches from the Front II: The Culture Wars Revisited

Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself,
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)
—Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*²²⁸

In *Culture Wars*, Hunter started off with a chapter called "Stories from the Front"²²⁹ in which he depicts various issues fueling the culture wars: homosexuality, abortion, the creation/evolution controversy, patriotism, and pornography. Those topics already hint at some of the overarching

²²¹ Bill O'Reilly, *Culture Warrior* (New York: Broadway Books, 2006) 1-2.

²²² Quoted in: James Davison Hunter, "The Enduring Culture War," *Is There a Culture War? A Dialogue on Values and American Public Life*, eds. E. J. Dionne Jr. and Michael Cromartie (Washington: Pew Research Center/Brookings Institution Press, 2006) 17.

²²³ Joe Klein, "The Culture War Is Really A Culture Circus," *time.com*, www.time.com/time/election2004/columnist/klein/article/0,18471,596077,00.html.

²²⁴ These terms are used synonymously in academic works and in the mass media. I will follow Hunter's example and use both terms, because I will discuss the works of various scholars, who also use both versions. Although one could certainly interpret these terms differently – the plural denoting the existence of several "culture wars," which do not necessarily have to be interrelated, and with "culture war" serving as a metaconcept to describe various cultural conflicts – this distinction is generally not made.

²²⁵ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 42f.

²²⁶ Cf. Alan Wolfe, *One Nation, After All* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998) 275ff.

²²⁷ *Disunited States of America* is a novel by Harry Turtledove, which incidentally has nothing to do with the current discussion about political polarization or the United States as a divided country.

²²⁸ Quoted in: Luther S. Luedtke, "The Search for American Character," *Making America. The Society and Culture of the United States*, ed. Luther S. Luedtke (Washington D.C.: United States Information Agency, 1987) 24.

²²⁹ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 3ff. The phrase 'Dispatches from the Front' is also the subtitle of a book by John C. Green, James L. Guth, Corwin E. Schmidt, and Lyman A. Kellstedt, which is listed in the bibliography.

themes of what Hunter calls the “contemporary culture war”²³⁰ – and almost two decades later, these issues are still at the center of the conflicts raging in American society. In 2005, these select storylines kept the interested culture wars observer in suspense:

Dispatch 1 – “Looking for God in Harry Potter”:²³¹ *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* became the center of a controversy when evangelical Christians criticized the glorification of witchcraft. A pastor in New Mexico even organized a burning of Harry Potter books. Another chapter in the “pop culture war,”²³² or more specifically the “Hollywood Wars,” was opened, since “it’s not the war abroad that matters this year but the one at home.”²³³

Dispatch 2 – “Culture War to the Death”:²³⁴ The case of Terri Schiavo, a coma patient whose husband had the feeding tube removed, also aroused the nation, pitting the usual suspects against each other: Republicans versus Democrats, conservative Christians versus liberal Christians, the American Center for Law & Justice versus the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), with each side accusing the other of instrumentalizing the case.²³⁵

Dispatch 3 – “Thank God For Katrina”:²³⁶ Even Hurricane Katrina was instrumentalized by fundamentalist fringe groups. Pastor Bill Shanks stated the following in its aftermath:

New Orleans now is abortion free. New Orleans now is Mardi Gras free. New Orleans now is free of Southern Decadence and the sodomites, the witchcraft workers, false religion – it’s free of all of those things now. God simply [...] in His mercy purged all of that stuff out of there – and now we’re going to start over again.²³⁷

Dispatch 4 – “The culture war knows no season”:²³⁸ Conservative pundits once again accused “a cabal of secularists, so-called humanists, trial lawyers, cultural relativists, and liberal, guilt-wracked Christians”²³⁹ of waging a war on Christmas and on Christianity in general. Yet, as Hendrik Hertzberg points out, this controversy seemed to be purely fabricated, because the “War on Christmas is a little like Santa Claus, in that it (a) comes to us from the sky, beamed

²³⁰ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 50.

²³¹ Jeremy Reynolds, “Looking for God In Harry Potter,” *The American Daily*, 12/23/2005, <http://www.americandaily.com/article/10354>.

²³² Cf. Lillian Kwon, “Over 25,000 Bay Area Youth Engage in Pop Culture War,” 03/27/2006, 02/14/2007, http://www.christianpost.com/article/20060327/14028_Over_25,000_Bay_Area_Youth_Engage_Pop_Culture_War.htm.

²³³ David Ignatius, “Hollywood’s Wars”, *The Washington Post*, 03/03/2006, 02/14/2007, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/03/02/AR2006030201207.html>.

²³⁴ Pat Buchanan, “Culture War to the Death,” *The American Conservative*, 01/27/2006, http://www.amconmag.com/11_17_03/buchanan.html.

²³⁵ Cf. Cachere.

²³⁶ Title of an article on the website of the Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kansas. Cf. B.A. Robinson, “Why did the Hurricane Katrina Happen?,” <http://www.religioustolerance.org/tsunami04h.htm>.

²³⁷ Quoted in: Jody Brown and Allie Martin, “New Orleans Residents: God’s Mercy Evident in Katrina’s Wake,” *Agape Press*, <http://headlines.agapepress.org/archive/9/22005b.asp>.

²³⁸ Michael M. Bates, “The culture war knows no season,” *RenewAmerica* 29 Oct.2005, <http://www.renewamerica.us/columns/bates/051129>.

²³⁹ John Gibson, *The War on Christmas* (New York: Sentinel, 2005) xxii.

down by the satellites of cable news, and (b) does not, in the boringly empirical sense, exist.”²⁴⁰

3.2. The American Culture Wars: Real, Imagined, or Fabricated?

cul-ture war, noun, definition: [...] public debate reflecting the division over religious, educational, political, and moral issues within a multicultural society. —MSN Encarta Dictionary²⁴¹

The different “Dispatches from the Front” already give a good introduction into the current state of cultural struggle and the entanglement of the different fields of conflict in the United States, as well as the manifold strategies employed by those who are readily engaged in their culture wars. The “War on Christmas” clearly seems to be manufactured, at least with regard to the degree it reached in 2005, and can very easily be traced back to John Gibson’s book and the coverage the topic got on *Fox News*. However, this does not seem to be the case with the Intelligent Design controversy, which I will examine in the case study of this work, since it simply reignited a debate that has been raging ever since the publication of Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* in 1859. In this chapter, I will take a closer look at the concepts behind Hunter’s culture war thesis, its historical roots, and the contemporary academic discourse about the existence and the scope of the American culture wars. Ultimately, I will assess the question of whether or not the USA is beleaguered by a state of conflict that actually deserves the rather harsh term “culture wars” – to which the answer may just be: “Yes – No – Sort of”.²⁴² My main focus will be on the worldviews, ideologies, and perceived social groups – real, imagined, or artificially created – at play in the culture wars. As indicated in the introduction of this work, I regard religion and the clash with what is commonly described as secularity as one of the conflict’s main roots.

3.2.1. “Milestones in the Culture Wars”:²⁴³ From *Kulturkampf* to the Counterculture

Without struggle, there is no progress. —Frederick Douglass²⁴⁴

The current talk of a divided nation and of two Americas is nothing new when looking back along the road of US history. “The Never-Ending War”²⁴⁵ over America’s self-meaning is now almost part of the American self-conception. For Hunter, an understanding of historical roots, past narratives (which are always stories about a struggle for power), and the reconstruction of the historical setting, are essential prerequisites to fully grasping the contemporary cultural wars.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁰ Hertzberg, Hendrik, “Bah Humbug,” *The New Yorker* 19 Dec. 2005, http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/12/26/051226ta_talk_hertzberg.

²⁴¹ *MSN Encarta Dictionary*, http://encarta.msn.com/dictionary_701705390/culture_war.html.

²⁴² Williams, Rhys H., “Is America in a Culture War? Yes – No – Sort Of,” *Christian Century* 114, November 12, 1997, 1038.

²⁴³ “Milestones in the Culture Wars,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, Volume 297 No.1, January /February 2006.

²⁴⁴ Wikipedia, “Frederick Douglass,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_Douglass.

²⁴⁵ Midge Decter, “The Never-Ending War: The Battle Over America’s Self-Meaning,” *The Heritage Foundation*, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/PoliticalPhilosophy/hl910.cfm>. In this lecture at the Heritage Foundation, Decter suggests that the battle for America’s self-meaning, which he also refers to as the culture war, has now lasted for more than 150 years.

²⁴⁶ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 35.

It would be frivolous to imagine that this conflict emerged spontaneously out of social and historical chance. Yet most discussions of the tensions in American society fail to consider the historical contexts. The truth of it is that the contemporary culture war evolved out of century-old religious tensions...²⁴⁷

Hunter considers religion, or rather faith, as the root cause of the social uproars that have vexed the United States over past decades and centuries. From the outset, American citizens identified themselves on the basis of their religious affiliation or their geographical location. In his chapter on the historical roots of the culture war, Hunter recounts how religiously motivated cultural struggles within the Protestant community – between Baptists, Dutch Calvinists, Quakers, Presbyterians, etc. – in the early stages of the American colonies moved on to a prolonged confrontation between Protestants and Catholics, the latter of whom were immigrating to the United States en masse beginning in the 1830s. Hunter compares that situation to the “Kulturkampf” between German Protestants and Catholics in the last quarter of the 19th century.²⁴⁸ Hunter then goes on to describe the realignment of the American religious landscape as a result of different reactions to modernity and the proceeding secularization of society, a process marked by Darwin’s theory of evolution and other scientific breakthroughs, as well as the new “higher criticism” of the Bible which challenged the inerrancy of scripture and viewed Christianity as a “product of historical and cultural causes.”²⁴⁹ The early 20th century then saw the ascent of a purely naturalistic worldview devoid of supernatural explanations and the installation of modern natural science as the highest authority of knowledge. The result was intrareligious conflict, a split of the Protestant community and a restructuring of American religion “that has polarized religious Americans into hostile camps of conservatives and liberals.”²⁵⁰ Theological liberals, who had a strong footing in the mainline churches and denominations tried to reconcile Christianity with new theories in both the social and natural sciences. Conservative or traditional Protestant groups came to be known as “fundamentalists”,²⁵¹ named after a series of booklets

²⁴⁷ Ibid. 67.

²⁴⁸ Cf. Ibid., 67f. and xii (preface).

²⁴⁹ Marsden, 137f. Cf. also Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 79f.

²⁵⁰ Robert Booth Fowler and Allen D. Hertzke, *Religion and Politics in America. Faith, Culture and Strategic Choices* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1995) 237.

²⁵¹ The term ‘fundamentalist’ was coined by conservative Baptist editor Curtis Lee Laws to give a common name to the militantly conservative factions who battled modernist theology and secularity. Marsden distinguishes fundamentalists from other Protestant groups on the basis of their willingness to fight and their depiction of the world through images of warfare. Furthermore, he also defines them according to their adherence to certain fundamental Christian and Protestant doctrines, which “usually included beliefs in the inerrancy of the Bible, the virgin birth of Jesus, the authenticity of his miracles, atonements for sin through the death of Christ, Jesus’ resurrection, and his coming again” (Marsden 193). Fundamentalists, Evangelicals, and conservative Christians are designations which are often lumped together and are used synonymous with the label “Christian Right.” In the *Dispatches*, I have rather used the latter two, which are broader and commonly used as categories in the media and, especially in the case of “evangelical,” in the academic literature. Not all conservative Christians are, of course, evangelicals, not every evangelical is conservative, and not every evangelical can be designated as a fundamentalist, who Marsden simply describes as “an evangelical who is angry about something” (Marsden 1). Kellstedt and Schmidt point out that there still is a lack of a definitional consensus. They also use the degree of militancy to distinguish evangelicals from the more radical fundamentalists. Thus, today’s fundamentalist movement is widely regarded as a sub-group of the broader American evangelicalism, which in turn is commonly used as a description and category for conservative Christians, who are born-again and who, although they do

called *The Fundamentals*, which were written between 1910 and 1915 and fervently attacked the perceived kowtow before natural science and the modernist ambitions in mainline denominations while simultaneously trying to preserve the interpretative authority of the Protestant worldview for broader society.²⁵² After World War II, what George M. Marsden calls the “Great Divide,” “a long-standing ideological fault line”²⁵³ between progressive and orthodox Protestants, deepened. The conflict is now firmly anchored not only in the theological realm but also in the broader public sphere of the United States, as it extends to institutions of public culture such as law, education, science, and government.²⁵⁴ While the liberal mainline denominations and the powerful “forces of modernization” shared the national spotlight of the postwar period and while many in the academia predicted “the Death of God in the 20th century,” evangelicals and fundamentalists rarely ventured into the public sphere.²⁵⁵ Starting in the 1920s, they had receded to their own thriving evangelical subculture, often confining themselves to their own schools, universities, and churches while listening to evangelists preaching over the Christian airwaves.²⁵⁶ It was not until the late 1970s that the orthodox part of Protestantism reemerged as a political and cultural force in public life. Led by preachers such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, who were widely regarded as fundamentalists, and represented by groups like the “Moral Majority,” this new “Christian Right” was seen as “the manifestation of a constant tension in American culture”²⁵⁷ that moved in a cyclical fashion, and thus constituted “the most recent stage of Protestant Right-wing politics to appear periodically throughout the twentieth century.”²⁵⁸ While the cleavage between progressive and traditionalist forces intensified due to the intrusion of the Religious Right into what Neuhaus terms the “public square,” this period was also marked by what Hunter calls the “New Ecumenism,”²⁵⁹ a “kind of cultural alliance [...] between conservative evangelicals and fundamentalists, some Catholics, and a few ultraorthodox

not believe in the absolute inerrancy, still regard the Bible as the ultimate authority and an almost unerring guide of how to conduct everyday life and how to interpret and explain the world (Cf. Lyman A. Kellstedt and Corwin E. Schmidt, “Measuring Fundamentalism: An Analysis of Different Operational Strategies,” *Religion and the Culture Wars. Dispatches from the Front*, eds. John C. Green, James L. Guth, Corwin E. Schmidt, Lyman A. Kellstedt (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1996) 193f). Manifold other terms, such as conservative evangelicals, fundamentalist evangelicals, or born-again Christians, are used in internet message boards or in the print media. In this work, I will stick to the terms “evangelicals” and “conservative Christians” and their variations, as they offer the greatest intersection and are a broader category. This usage will, of course, also simplify matters and guarantee a conceptual consistency. Consequently, I will only use “Christian Right” or “fundamentalist” when explicitly referring to these specific variations.

²⁵² Cf. Marsden 138, 179f.

²⁵³ Marsden, 247.

²⁵⁴ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 95.

²⁵⁵ Randall Ballmer, *Religion in Twentieth Century America*, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) 7.

²⁵⁶ D. G. Hart, “Mainstream Protestantism, “Conservative” *Religion, and Civil Society*,” *Religion Returns to the Public Square. Faith and Policy in America*, eds. Hugh Heclo and Wilfred M. McClay (Washington D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2003) 201.

²⁵⁷ Fowler and Hertzke, 148.

²⁵⁸ Hart, 196.

²⁵⁹ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 97.

Jews,”²⁶⁰ united by their common orthodox worldview and against “a ‘progressive’ coalition”²⁶¹ propagating a secular worldview: The new ecumenism, then, represents the key institutional expressions of the realignment of American public culture and, in turn, it provides the institutional battle lines for the contemporary culture war.²⁶² The advent of the Religious Right and the return of the evangelical movement coincided with not only a loss of membership and overall weakening of the liberal mainline denominations, but also with a considerable rise of the secular segment of the population, which – though this category is not clearly defined and remains disputed – commonly describes those who seldom attend church, show little to none religious commitment, or list no religious affiliation.²⁶³ Stanley B. Greenberg, using a rather broad category, estimates that these “secular warriors,” who are usually well educated and who predominantly reside in larger cities and can be found on the coasts, today comprise up to 30 percent of the population.²⁶⁴ Other estimations range from 15 to 30 percent.²⁶⁵ Yet, as Hunter points out, the increase rivals that of the evangelical segment by characterizing the secularists as “the fastest-growing community of ‘moral conviction’ in America,”²⁶⁶ which in 1962 only made up 2 percent of the population and by 1972 had only reached the 5 percent mark. Atheists – those who explicitly do not believe in or deny the existence of God (or of gods in general) – are usually counted as part of the secular segment. According to a recent study conducted by Baylor University in 2006, atheists comprised 5.2 percent of the American population. The same study also mentions that evangelical Protestants had replaced members of the liberal mainline denominations as the largest religious group in the USA.²⁶⁷

Other interpretations of the current cultural conflicts have also traveled down the same road of history, but bent off much earlier. Conservative historian Gertrude Himmelfarb also locates the origin of the contemporary culture war in the upheaval of the 1960s, marked by the civil rights movement, the student movement, and the protests against the war in Vietnam, which caused the current situation of *One Nation, Two Cultures*. In her book of the same title, Himmelfarb depicts one of the two cultures as “the heir of the counterculture”²⁶⁸ of the 1960s, which Theodore Roszak, who is said to have coined the term, described in 1968 as “the embryonic cultural base of New Left politics...on the far side of power politics, the bourgeois home, and the Protestant work ethic.”²⁶⁹ Himmelfarb rates the secular and permissive counterculture as a cultural revolution, similar to the ones in Europe in 1968, which progressed so far to become the dominant

²⁶⁰ Fowler and Hertzke, 237.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 98.

²⁶³ Cf. Fowler and Hertzke, 102.

²⁶⁴ Cf. Sönke Schreyer, “Religion, Wählerkoalitionen und politische Parteien,” *God bless America. Politik und Religion in den USA*, ed. Manfred Bocker (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005) 159. Greenberg’s numbers are based on the year 2000. Cf. also Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 75.

²⁶⁵ Cf. Fowler and Hertzke, 104.

²⁶⁶ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 76.

²⁶⁷ Cf. Katja Gelinsky, “Gottes eigenes Volk,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 26.09.2006, 42.

²⁶⁸ Himmelfarb, 124.

²⁶⁹ Quoted in Himmelfarb, 16.

culture of today, represented by the sociocultural liberal elites.²⁷⁰ In her interpretation, a dissident culture, the “countercounterculture,” emerged as a reaction against social change, against the “increasingly ‘looser’ system of morals,”²⁷¹ of which the religious right represented the hard core of activists, but yet only formed a small part within a much larger group of evangelicals.²⁷² Similarly, in *What’s the Matter with Kansas*, Thomas Frank locates the origin of contemporary strife in the “Great Backlash, a style of conservatism that first came snarling onto the national stage in response to the partying and protests of the late sixties.”²⁷³ This backlash is thus conservative in nature, married with Christian values and zeal (and business interests). It revolves around moral issues like abortion and gay marriage, their agenda “the kingdom of God,”²⁷⁴ united against the liberal elites, who remain phantom-like, but who, in the backlash imagination and narrative, are the natural enemy of the faithful, hard-working, common people. Frank also depicts how the conservative backlash started as a populist grassroots movement, triggered by a self-perceived oppressed majority, part of what President Richard Nixon deemed the “silent majority,” and then developed into a political force, conquering the Republican Party by winning the intra-party “civil war pitting moderates against conservatives...”²⁷⁵ In this interpretation, the culture war then is a conservative creation, one of the religious right who positioned themselves “as part of an imagined community of ‘us’”²⁷⁶ against “them”: the liberal elites, the mass media, the atheistic scientists.²⁷⁷ Two instances of restructuring thus occurred and intertwined as

...twentieth-century American Protestantism began to split into two major parties, not only between conservatives and liberals in theology but correspondingly between conservatives and progressives politically.²⁷⁸

Hence, everything seems to boil down to Hunter’s thesis of an all-out battle, yes, even a war between the two polarizing impulses, the orthodox and the progressive, between cultural conservatives and secularists in the broader society and not just confined to the Protestant community, with each side trying to establish itself as the “cultural insiders and to define the nature of American consensus.”²⁷⁹

²⁷⁰ Cf. *ibid.* 16f, 124f.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 124.

²⁷² Cf. *ibid.*, 124f.

²⁷³ Frank, 5.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 89. Cf. also *ibid.* 9, 95f.

²⁷⁶ Scatamburlo, 8.

²⁷⁷ Cf. Frank, 7.

²⁷⁸ Marsden, 30.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 249. Cf. also Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 143.

3.2.2. “The Struggle to Define America”:²⁸⁰ Hunter’s Culture War Model

[W]e come to see that the contemporary culture war is ultimately a struggle over national identity – over the meaning of America.
—James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars*²⁸¹

When James Davison Hunter published *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* in 1991, cultural warfare in the United States, following the tides, seemed to have ebbed a bit. The end of the religious right had been proclaimed, marked by the demise of the Moral Majority in 1989, though a large part of the movement became institutionalized as part of the Republican Party and consequently resorted to a tamer language and demeanor.²⁸² The national agenda was still dominated by international events: the fall of the iron curtain and the end of communism. The presidential campaign of 1992 saw Democratic challenger and eventual winner Bill Clinton running on an almost purely economic agenda. Consequently, as Hunter himself admitted, his book and the accompanying culture war thesis caught on slowly in both the academic and public discourses.²⁸³ Yet, as early as 1992, presidential hopeful Pat Buchanan, seemingly inspired by Hunter, decried that a culture war for the soul of America was underway.²⁸⁴ The outbreak of culture war rhetoric during the mid-1990s, which swept conservative Republicans into the House of Representatives on a wave of evangelical votes, as well as the rise of new groups like the Christian Coalition, proved that evangelical groups, widely credited with exploiting the cultural cleavage, had not lost much steam and that images of the culture war as depicted by Hunter remained vivid. In *Culture Wars*, he had portrayed a nation suffering from a deep cultural schism, inhabited on one side by an alliance of liberal, secularist, and modernist forces, on the other by traditional, conservative, and religious, mostly Protestant evangelical forces. Hunter subsumes these two warring camps under the labels “orthodox” and “progressive,” which to him embody the essence of the culture war, the adverse belief system and ideological worldviews, the “polarizing impulses” tearing apart American society.²⁸⁵ For Hunter, orthodoxy means “*the commitment on the parts of adherents to an external, definable, and transcendent authority* [italics in original]”²⁸⁶ while cultural progressivism is “defined by the spirit of the modern age, a spirit of rationalism and subjectivism,”²⁸⁷ by a resymbolization of historic faiths and the negation of absolute truth claims. In Hunter’s model, the orthodox, especially evangelical Americans, want to establish a Christian nation, since to them “the fiber of Christ is in the very fabric of America,”²⁸⁸ while the goal of the progressive side is “to guarantee a secular, humanistic state.”²⁸⁹

²⁸⁰ Subtitle of Hunter’s book *Culture Wars*.

²⁸¹ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 49.

²⁸² Wilcox, 42f.

²⁸³ The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, “Is There A Culture War?” Event Transcript, 23 May 2006, <http://pewforum.org/events/?EventID=112>.

²⁸⁴ Cf. Davis and Robinson, 39.

²⁸⁵ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 43f.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 44.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 109.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 113.

The source of the orthodox appeal to (moral) authority is based on religious knowledge, on the truth that the world and life were created by God, while progressivism bases its claim to authority on scientific knowledge and personal experience in the tradition of Enlightenment subjectivism.²⁹⁰ Hunter's depiction is "a story about the struggle for power,"²⁹¹ as the two warring camps struggle about the power to define the meaning of America, and therefore also aim to seize control over what Hunter calls "the instrumentality of reality definition"²⁹² – the institutions of public information and entertainment. Following the scenario as described in the methodical part of my work, both sides employ common discursive strategies. They use discrediting labels which often parallel past antagonisms, and they both decry that the other side misrepresents them, that the other side wants to impose their values and beliefs:

...both ends of the cultural axis claim to speak for the majority, both attempt to monopolize the symbols of legitimacy, both identify their opponents with a program of intolerance and totalitarian suppression, both use language of extremism and thereby sensationalize the threat represented by their adversaries.²⁹³

Consequently, Hunter notes that, from a sociological perspective, the contemporary culture war is not about being right or wrong, but about "sustaining a particular definition of reality against those who would project an alternate view of the world."²⁹⁴

Though Hunter never really elaborates on why exactly he chooses a metaphor of war to describe the current situation in the United States, he justifies his analogies to warfare by emphasizing the deepness of the cultural cleavage: the orthodox and the progressive inhabit two separate worlds, "two fundamentally different cultural systems,"²⁹⁵ each one with their own values, ideals and interests, their own vocabulary, beliefs, truths. Though "the cultural conservative and the progressivist are each outsiders to the other's cultural milieu,"²⁹⁶ they judge each other, they clash, and they strive for dominance in the contested arena of what Hunter calls "public culture," "spheres of symbolic activity"²⁹⁷ in which culture orders experience and gives meaning through discourse. The "public culture" consists of what Hunter considers the central fields of conflict in the culture war: family, education, mass media, as well as the arts, law, and electoral politics.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 119f.

²⁹¹ Cf. *ibid.*, 35.

²⁹² Ibid., 226.

²⁹³ Ibid., 156. Cf. also *ibid.*, 140f, 157f.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 158.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 128. Hunter here thus uses a common academic definition of culture: a set of shared, customs, values, ideas, morals, knowledge, and beliefs which function as a glue holding society together and which are the objects over which groups camps struggle. Yet, Hunter also goes beyond this definition and employs another, different concept of culture: the means groups use in a struggle – the media, art, movies, literature, cultural symbols, soundbites, and so on. Williams in this context calls culture "the storehouse or repertoire of symbols that people wield in their attempts to shape their world" (Cf. Williams, "Introduction," 6f). In the panel discussion about the culture wars, Hunter clarifies that he also understands culture along the lines of this second concept. This neoclassical view of culture, contrary to the first definition, emphasizes the production of culture and spotlights the resources and the institutions, the elites who produce cultural symbols and rituals, and which also looks at how public discourse and structures of power and authority (Cf. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "Is There A Culture War?" Event Transcript, 23 May 2006, <http://pewforum.org/events/?EventID=112>).

²⁹⁶ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 247.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 53.

Finally, “[a]t the heart of culture, though, is religion, or systems of faith. And at the heart of religion are its claims to truths about the world.”²⁹⁸ Thus, the divisions are so deep that they go beyond a mere battle between groups – the culture war is more than a battle between liberals and conservatives on either a political or religious level and more than the various social issues that polarize the nation, but between different belief systems and world views.²⁹⁹ Consequently, since both sides hover on different moral planes and dwell in incompatible, competing realities, Hunter notes that the chances and the willingness for a substantiated dialogue between the two camps on each side of the cultural divide are very bleak.³⁰⁰ More than anything, the different sources of knowledge and different claims to absolute truths seem to make positive persuasion almost impossible and both sides focus on the negative aspects of conflict and discourse as “dialogue has largely been replaced by name calling, denunciation, and even outright intolerance.”³⁰¹ The cultural schism will therefore rather grow deeper:

*...the opposing moral visions become (...) a reality sui generis: a reality much larger than, and indeed autonomous from, the sum total of individuals and organizations that give expression to the conflict. The competing moral visions, and the rhetoric that sustains them, become the defining forces of public life [italics original].*³⁰²

However, Hunter admits that the majority of Americans are not engaged in the culture war, occupying “a vast middle ground between the polarizing impulses of American culture.”³⁰³ In his estimation, each side of the cultural divide compromises up to 20 percent of the population. In the style of President Nixon’s coinage of the “Silent Majority” and the “Moral Majority” of the late 1970s and 1980s, this middle ground could certainly be called the “Moderate Majority.” Yet, it is especially important to take into account that meaning and reality are discursively created, that the voices of this new and different silent majority are rarely heard in the public sphere, and that they often remain quiet and are, additionally, not favored by a sensationalized public debate encouraged by mass media outlets who focus on stories with a polarizing angle.³⁰⁴ It is thus the radical fringes, the vocal elites “who possess tremendous power in the realm of public discourse.”³⁰⁵ Consequently, Hunter concludes that “*public discourse is more polarized than the American public itself* [italics in original].”³⁰⁶ Hunter also emphasizes that many Americans do not fit neatly in categories like “progressive” or “conservative” and that the lines of separation

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 57. Here, Hunter also elaborates on his use of ‘faith’, which “is used broadly here to include any more or less formal system of belief,” instead of ‘ideology’. According to Hunter, ‘faith’ just seems the more appropriate term in the American context as it captures “the essence of almost everything that passes for belief in America.” Thus, both can be regarded almost as synonyms, as ‘faith’ in this usage also contains secular ideologies, while ‘religion’, as shown earlier in this work, can also be considered an ideology.

²⁹⁹ Cf. ibid., 48f, 63.

³⁰⁰ Cf. ibid., 130.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 136.

³⁰² Ibid., 291.

³⁰³ Ibid., 43.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 159f.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 43.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 159.

are not always sharp. Hence, “myriad individuals...define themselves more or less in the middle of the ideological spectrum.”³⁰⁷

3.2.3. “Is There A Culture War?”³⁰⁸ Debating Hunter’s Thesis

It’s time to challenge the metaphor – and the easy caricatures of left and right that sustain it.

Is there a culture war in the United States? Of course. There always has been and always will be.
— E. J. Dionne Jr.³⁰⁹

Though at first Hunter’s culture war thesis caught on rather slowly, by the mid-1990s it had rapidly emanated into the mass media and from there into public culture and the broader society. The metaphor of the culture war started to serve as a paradigmatic interpretative and explanatory model for polarized politics and cultural conflicts. Headlines echoing the state of cultural warfare or using related images such as the red-blue divide were abundant and became a standard imagery in the news. However, the usage was often only partly consistent with Hunter’s model, as many commentators focused purely on political polarization and therefore on the divide, on the war between liberals and conservatives, or congruently along party lines between Republicans and Democrats. Thus, the phrase “culture wars” has taken on a life of its own, inspired but to a certain degree independent from Hunter’s definition, looming as a quick-fix solution for the interpretation of various social struggles in the United States. Struggles over abortion or evolution, which have existed long before the usage of “culture wars” became en vogue, today are a fundamental feature of the narrative of the culture wars, but political commentators, political activists, and others have caused an almost inflationary use of the scenario by seeing every kind of conflict as part of the culture wars, which to them seems to be the determining factor of American society. The culture wars then have become another form of a reality *sui generis*: a dominant – partly simplistic, clichéd, and hackneyed – master frame, a taken-for-granted status quo that is often readily invoked by the media and by competing social groups but which is seldom scrutinized or even challenged. This paradigmatic use is upheld by what can be termed ‘culture wars industry’. Authors such as Bill O’Reilly or Ann Coulter on the right, the self-proclaimed traditional, moral, Christian and patriotic side, again and again deliver an emphatic call to arms for conservatives and Americans in general to face off against what O’Reilly in his book *Culture Warrior* snubs the “committed forces of the secular-progressive movement,”³¹⁰ the godless liberals who in turn counter with books and pamphlets of their own, warning the reader of the coming of an American theocracy. A simple search on Amazon.com

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 105.

³⁰⁸ *Is There A Culture War* is the title of a 2006 panel discussion and a subsequent book, in which four of the leading (or at least most vocal) scholars on the American culture wars – James Davison Hunter, Alan Wolfe, Gertrude Himmelfarb, Morris P. Fiorina – all assess the existence of a culture war in the United States based on Hunter’s original conception from 1991.

³⁰⁹ E. J. Dionne Jr., “Why the Culture War Is the Wrong War,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, January/February 2006.

³¹⁰ O’Reilly, *Culture Warrior*, 2.

will turn up manifold books like *How to Win the Culture War: A Christian Battle Plan for a Society in Crisis* (Peter Kreeft) and *Persecution: How Liberals Are Waging War Against Christianity* (David Limbaugh), as well as *Atheist Universe: The Thinking Person's Answer to Christian Fundamentalism* (David Mills and Dorion Sagan) and *Letter to a Christian Nation* (Sam Harris).

Journalists and stakeholders in cultural conflicts, politicians in search of ways to fire up their base and to distinguish themselves from their opponents (though after every election, they vow to unite the nation anew) use the culture wars model. But there are also, of course, many in academia – sociologists, political scientists, cultural theorists like Gertrude Himmelfarb, Robert Wuthnow³¹¹ – who generally support Hunter's thesis. For example, Valerie Scatamburlo echoes Hunter's assessment that culture, due to its constitutive function in the formation of identities and as a source of social power, "inevitably becomes the battlefield upon which the struggle for control over collective consciousness is ultimately waged."³¹² And political scientists Robert Booth Fowler and Allen D. Hertzke maintain "that signs of culture wars in the United States are unmistakable" and that the "culture wars theory is an essential element in understanding religion and politics in the United States today."³¹³ Hence, Demerath and Yang argue that the broad usage and "the mere acceptance of the phrase 'culture war' is ipso facto evidence of its reality."³¹⁴ But, they also start the roundelay of criticism of Hunter's thesis by asserting that it has already made the transition from jargon to cliché.

In *One Nation, After All*, sociologist Alan Wolfe puts forward the thesis that the culture war is only fought by intellectuals and the mass media, which he ranks in what he calls the "camp of the shouters,"³¹⁵ because in his eyes they actively try to polarize the nation by emphasizing the negative. According to him, middle class America is not polarized at all and is instead a reservoir of moderation. Similarly, Morris P. Fiorina, using dozens of opinion polls and other statistical data, argues in *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America* that all the talk of a culture war and a divided electorate ranges "from simple exaggeration to sheer nonsense":³¹⁶ "The simple truth is that there is no culture war in the United States – no battle for the soul of America rages, at least none that most Americans are aware of."³¹⁷ Fiorina contends that the perceived division of the nation stems from the reporting of the mass media and the polarization of the two parties, the Democrats and the Republicans, and their bedrock supporters as well as cultural and social elites. Thus, instead of a popular polarization, the USA has only fallen victim to a partisan polarization, as the country in Fiorina's view has not become more polarized in the last

³¹¹ For a detailed discussion of the academic reception of Hunter's book *Culture Wars*, cf. Dale McConkey, "Whither Hunter's Culture War? Shifts in Evangelical Morality, 1988–1998," *Sociology of Religion* 62 (2001).

³¹² Scatamburlo, 6.

³¹³ Fowler and Hertzke, 239.

³¹⁴ N. J. Demerath III and Yonghe Yang, "What American Culture War? A View from the Trenches as Opposed to the Command Posts and the Press Corps," *Culture Wars in American Politics: Critical Reviews of a Popular Myth*, ed. Rhys H. Williams (New York: Hawthorne, 1997) 17.

³¹⁵ Wolfe, *One Nation, After All*, 295. Cf also *ibid.*, 276.

³¹⁶ Fiorina, *Culture War?* 7.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

decades.³¹⁸ Yet, Fiorina admits that there is a division, even statistically significant, on homosexuality and abortion, though the attitudes on these issues have even converged over the last decades as American society has grown more tolerant and more centrist, and that religion has become a cause for electoral cleavages.³¹⁹ However, he remains steadfast that the polarization is due to the association of the Republican Party with evangelical groups and of the Democratic Party with secular voting blocs and organizations.³²⁰ Fiorina's final verdict is that

Reports of a culture war are mostly wishful thinking and useful fund-raising strategies on the part of culture war guerrillas, abetted by a media driven by the need to make the dull and everyday appear exciting and unprecedented.³²¹

Taking the same line, other scholars warn of the "self-fulfilling quality about the talk of culture wars"³²² because the accompanying stereotyping and the "blinding rhetoric of cultural conflict" would only help create "culture wars where none previously existed" by providing a master frame under which different events can be easily subsumed. Sociologist Rhys H. Williams criticizes the (admittedly) simplistic "bipolar ideological axis"³²³ of Hunter's model, although Hunter, consistent with his statement of a largely moderate middle ground, had culturally divided Americans into five categories.³²⁴ Yet, more importantly, Williams seems to be bothered most by Hunter picking a military metaphor to describe his model: "There is cultural conflict in American life, but is it war?"³²⁵ A lot of the criticism of Hunter's thesis thus seems to solely focus on the choice of the term 'war' to describe cultural conflicts and cultural cleavages, phrases which Hunter also uses. Historian Leo Ribuffo, for example, laments,

But to describe these conflicts as a cultural war is both off base and irresponsible, an example of what the great sociologist David Riesman called the American penchant for "big talk"...We haven't had a cultural war [*italics in original*], really, since the cavalry attacked the Mormons in the 1850s.³²⁶

Against this judgment, Gertrude Himmelfarb rushes to the defense, pointing out "that the 'culture war' is a 'war' only metaphorically, just as the 'cultural revolution' is a 'revolution' only metaphorically."³²⁷ Hunter, without a doubt, intended his use to be understood metaphorically – and in a metaphorical sense, Americans have experienced a war, a war of words characterized by violent discourse and inflamed rhetoric, which in few but notable instances has translated

³¹⁸ Ibid., 8f, 15f.

³¹⁹ Cf., ibid. 21, 35f, 113.

³²⁰ Cf., ibid. 129.

³²¹ Ibid., 49

³²² Fowler and Hertzke, 239.

³²³ Rhys H. Williams, "Introduction," *Culture Wars in American Politics: Critical Reviews of a Popular Myth*, ed. Rhys H. Williams (New York: Hawthorne, 1997) 3.

³²⁴ In his report *The State of Disunion: 1996 Survey of American Political Culture*, Hunter distinguished Americans into five categories: neotraditionalists, conventionalists, pragmatists, communitarians, and permissivists. According to him, each of these groups comprises more than 10 percent of the population. Cf. Wolfe, *One Nation, After All*, 276.

³²⁵ Williams, "Introduction," 5.

³²⁶ Quoted in: Michael Cromartie, *Religion and Politics in America: A Conversation* (Oxford: EPPC, 2005) 158.

³²⁷ Himmelfarb, 141.

into actual violence. Thus, the manic manner in which the militant camps and self-proclaimed 'culture warriors' confront each other in the public sphere, the negative tone of discourse, the overall hostility that seeks to shoot down opposing opinions and different worldviews and even tries to exclude moderate voices, and the ensuing polarization, justify the recourse to a metaphor of warfare.³²⁸ "To those engaged in this conflict – the activists who are involved in the divisions and the citizens who get caught up in the logic – this is just the right metaphor."³²⁹ Though the majority of the public might not be warring, the radical fringes who dominate discourse, who command the airwaves, and who get the lion's share of the media coverage, undeniably create the image of a society smitten by cultural warfare, even if it is only an exaggerated perception.

In 2006, the main adversaries in the academic dispute about the existence of the culture wars – Hunter and Alan Wolfe – came together in a panel discussion named *Is There A Culture War?*, sponsored by *The Pew Forum of Religion & Public Life*, which also served as the foundation for the publication of a similarly-titled book and which also incorporates contributions by the no less involved Himmelfarb and Fiorina. Wolfe and Fiorina, clinging to their opinion polls and survey data, continue their assertion that the culture wars are largely "an elite-driven phenomenon"³³⁰ existing "in the minds of journalists and political activists,"³³¹ fought by "by partisans and ideologues"³³² as well as religious organizations, a phenomenon characterized by "uncivil argument and behavior"³³³ which Fiorina predicts will falter because "[n]ormal Americans raise their children not to behave in these ways."³³⁴

Hunter's response to the criticism was that he never understood why there was and is a debate at all. In *Culture Wars*, he acknowledged that the vast majority of Americans are non-combatants in the culture wars, that the mass media and their thirst for sensationalism amplify polarization, and that "public discourse...is largely a discourse of elites."³³⁵ More than a decade later, Hunter also adjusts his estimations of the 'culture warriors', of those who "occupy...opposing moral and ideological universes,"³³⁶ downwards to between 10 and 15 percent of the population. Addressing Wolfe and Fiorina specifically, he admits that he did not find himself "disagreeing very much with the analysis at all...but with the conclusions."³³⁷ Hence, one

³²⁸ Cf. Manske, 10.

³²⁹ James Davison Hunter, "The Enduring Culture War," *Is There A Culture War? A Dialogue on Values and American Public Life*, eds. E. J. Dionne Jr. and Michael Cromartie (Washington D.C.: Pew Research Center/Brookings Institution Press, 2006) 35.

³³⁰ Morris P. Fiorina, "Further Reflections on the Culture War Thesis," *Is There A Culture War? A Dialogue on Values and American Public Life*, eds. E. J. Dionne Jr. and Michael Cromartie (Washington D.C.: Pew Research Center/Brookings Institution Press, 2006) 87.

³³¹ Alan Wolfe, "The Culture War That Never Came," *Is There A Culture War? A Dialogue on Values and American Public Life*, eds. E. J. Dionne Jr. and Michael Cromartie (Washington D.C.: Pew Research Center/Brookings Institution Press, 2006) 42.

³³² *Ibid.*, 53

³³³ Fiorina, "Further Reflections on the Culture War Thesis," 85.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 59.

³³⁶ Hunter, "The Enduring Culture War," 25.

³³⁷ The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "Is There A Culture War?" Event Transcript, 23 May 2006, <http://pewforum.org/events/?EventID=112>.

major point of contention remains: Wolfe insists, on the basis of his polls and statistics, that “our differences are political rather than cultural and religious; we disagree over abortion or gay marriage because some of us are conservatives and others are liberals”³³⁸ and thus concludes that the culture wars have no deep roots within the minds and hearts of American society. He thus grants politics a primacy over cultural issues and identities. Hunter on the other hand asserts that “culture nearly always leads politics, not the other way around.”³³⁹ He retains the view that the culture wars are historically grown, although they are waxing and waning, that the antagonisms between the orthodox and the progressivists, between their competing moral ideals and worldviews, are not only played out on the surface of social life – hotly contested cultural, social and political struggles over issues such as abortion and evolution/Intelligent Design – but have translated to a much deeper level, a level where the “power of culture is the power to name things, to define reality, to create and shape the worlds of meaning.”³⁴⁰ Not surprisingly then, Hunter’s focus “is on the symbolic dimensions of the conflict, the nature and institutional structures and dynamics of the discourse, the competing sources of authority,”³⁴¹ the involved ideologies and moral visions, the cultural narratives. Since “culture is made up of various systems of actors and institutions competing in fields of social life for position, resources, and symbolic capital,”³⁴² it is always contested and different collective identities and social groups inevitable clash with a necessary ‘other’.

Furthermore, Hunter also attacks the reliance on polls and survey data, propagated by Wolfe and Fiorina, as the sole explanation to prove or disprove the existence of the American culture war. Ideas, beliefs, and attitudes and other underlying phenomena at play in cultural conflicts are certainly hard to decipher in polls and surveys because “they lie away beneath the realm of opinion.”³⁴³ Nevertheless, Hunter stresses that polls do actually support the view of a polarized electorate, that “no matter how you slice the pie statistically, you end up with about 5 to 7 percent of the American population on each side who represents the white hot core of opposition.”³⁴⁴ Conversely, Hunter trounces Wolfe’s and Fiorina’s own myth: that of united and like-minded middle class America based on a misleading and rushed interpretation of statistical data. Hunter claims that the image of a moderate majority does not necessarily imply that this segment of the population is united and, as Wolfe maintains, “one nation after all,” but that the vast middle-ground instead tilts towards one side or the other. Public discourse, dominated by

³³⁸ Alan Wolfe, “A Response from Alan Wolfe,” *Is There A Culture War? A Dialogue on Values and American Public Life*, eds. E. J. Dionne Jr. and Michael Cromartie (Washington D.C.: Pew Research Center/Brookings Institution Press, 2006) 106.

³³⁹ James Davison Hunter, “A Response from James Davison Hunter,” *Is There A Culture War? A Dialogue on Values and American Public Life*, eds. E. J. Dionne Jr. and Michael Cromartie (Washington D.C.: Pew Research Center/Brookings Institution Press, 2006) 94.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 33.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 92.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 33.

³⁴³ Decter.

³⁴⁴ The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, “Is There A Culture War?” Event Transcript, 23 May 2006, <http://pewforum.org/events/?EventID=112>.

polarized elites and activists, frames issues in an either/or scheme, and thus inevitably divides communities and societies that would favor other, more harmonious solutions.³⁴⁵ Thus, “when push came to shove, Americans – even in the middle – made a choice.”³⁴⁶

3.3. Conclusion: Culture Wars? “Yes – No – Sort of”³⁴⁷

Toto, I have the feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore.

—Dorothy, *The Wizard of Oz*

Culture is the Ho Chi Minh trail of power; you surrender that province and you lose America.

—Pat Buchanan³⁴⁸

Hunter’s culture wars model has certainly created a stir within both the academic and the public spheres. Though Wolfe, Fiorina and others in the camp of culture war opponents, or at least in the camp of those who argue against an interpretation of the current situation as a state of culture wars, answer the question of whether America is in a state of cultural warfare with a “No”, theirs is not a definite and wholehearted “No”. They all contend “that there exists something called a culture war”³⁴⁹ fought by the mass media, polarized politicians, and other partisans and ideologues, “a situation in which religion and politics meet.”³⁵⁰ Yet, this does not substantiate a claim to implicate the vast majority of Americans into the culture wars framework. Hunter and his camp on the other side take the analysis and interpretation of the current situation one step deeper to the level of culture and thus hurl an emphatic “Yes” towards doubters of the culture wars. Dale McConkey, firmly embedded in Hunter’s military analogy, ascertains that “the troops appear just as ideologically well armed for cultural warfare as they did a decade ago...”³⁵¹ Accordingly, Hunter replied to sociologist Steven Brint – who had critically posed the question “Can one have a proper war when two-thirds of the army are noncombatants?”³⁵² – that throughout history, war has mainly been a minority affair.³⁵³ He maintains that the culture war “has everything to do with the institutions and elites that provide leadership”³⁵⁴ to the factions engaged in warfare, assembled under the banners of “orthodox” and “progressive” and equipped with and united by fundamentally different worldviews and hence being “worlds apart,”³⁵⁵ because the elites and institutions like the mass media have unparalleled and unmatched discursive, communicative, political, economic resources. In concert with the “culture warriors,” the “5 to 8 percent of the population who are the grassroots activists,”³⁵⁶ and other “larger parts

³⁴⁵ Cf. Hunter, “The Enduring Culture War,” 30.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 33.

³⁴⁷ Williams, “Is America in a Culture War?”

³⁴⁸ Quoted in: Scatamburlo, 5.

³⁴⁹ Wolfe, “The Culture War That Never Came,” 49.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ McConkey.

³⁵² Quoted in: Hunter, “The Enduring Culture War,” 27.

³⁵³ The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, “Is There A Culture War?” Event Transcript, May 23, 2006, <http://pewforum.org/events/?EventID=112>.

³⁵⁴ Hunter, “The Enduring Culture War,” 27.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 25.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 28.

of the population whose fundamental orientation leans one way or another,”³⁵⁷ they are able to frame the debate about specific social struggles and to create and maintain an atmosphere of conflict that registers with broader American society. For the polarized factions the culture wars are real, but they also impose their reality on the more moderate portions of the population.

Yet, the answer to the *Gretchenfrage* “Is there a Culture War?” might only be, following sociologist Rhys H. Williams, a “Sort Of” when taking into account the moderate majority of Americans who certainly incline towards one of the feuding camps but for whom the culture wars have no relevance and the frontlines are far away. In a sense, many Americans are then also “worlds apart” from the polarized and conflict-minded fringes. Moreover, like any theory, Hunter’s culture wars thesis is admittedly simplification, a simplistic interpretation of a more complex picture. Naturally, not all members of cultural or social elites are polarized, not all evangelicals are militant (therefore, the distinction between fundamentalists and evangelicals), not all mass media outlets lack any objectivity, not all politicians, Republicans and Democrats, are ideologues. Though Hunter later developed a more complex system of categories, the categorization commonly associated with culture wars both in academia and in public discourse – that of two warring camps, one orthodox/conservative/evangelical, the other progressive/liberal/secular – fails to embrace the fragmentation and sometimes even the incoherence of groups who are perceived to operate within these sides as well as the existence of a continuum of political opinions and cultural values.³⁵⁸ Hunter here can be criticized for falling for the simplistic, binary thinking of the culture warriors who seek to reduce the complexities and differences to just a single one: the difference between liberals and conservatives or between secularists and Christians.

Yet, Hunter’s thesis is a useful working model for the interpretation and explanation of issues and cultural conflicts such as the ID controversy or abortion. The moderate majority has no voice in these conflicts – and rarely a coherent opinion – and thus is overshadowed by the fringes while in many cases being pushed to take sides. In light of the persisting issues being fought about, my opinion regularly drifts over to Hunter’s “Yes.” I tend to share his view of an “enduring culture war”³⁵⁹ in which the competing groups, welded together by their different worldviews, stand vis-à-vis in scenarios “repeated myriad times,”³⁶⁰ fighting about school prayer, evolution, or gay marriage while hurling familiar stereotypes at each other. Furthermore, Hunter’s assertion that religion, or more specifically the evangelical exegesis of Christian religion, is a root cause of the contemporary culture wars, is not disputed even by his harshest critics, although they dispute the scope, power, and importance of evangelical groups. In the United States, religion enjoys a vitality which is unmatched by any other industrialized country of the Western hemisphere. Conservative evangelical Christians, though operating from a biblical foundation, often elevate ideology “over theology to such an extent that the public witness of

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Williams.

³⁵⁹ Hunter, “The Enduring Culture War,” 10.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 29.

faith in our day has become a partisan and political witness.”³⁶¹ Religion is thus much more than faith – “it is the pivot of the cultural tradition of a group”³⁶² and thus dominates both their culture and their political orientation. Republicans and Democrats are certainly divided according to their religious orientation and the frequency of church attendance. Yet, they are not (only) polarized because they are members of different parties, but mainly because of their cultural presuppositions. The current incarnation of the culture wars starting in the late 1970s and early 1980s indicates a causal coincidence with a realignment of party constituencies. In 1979, Democrats, having their traditional strongholds in the southern states, still outnumbered Republicans among evangelical voters by approximately three to two.³⁶³ By 2004, this number easily had more than reversed: almost 90 percent of “Traditionalist Evangelicals” and almost two thirds of “Centrist Evangelicals” voted for the Republican incumbent George W. Bush.³⁶⁴ This realignment is a good indicator of how cultural polarization has caused the stark political polarization. Evangelical groups today are firmly entrenched within the Republican Party, to the point where they are able to exert control over some of the state organizations as described by Frank in *What’s the Matter with Kansas*, while secularists and progressive or liberal Christians are now a mainstay in the Democratic Party, causing considerable portions of the American society, according to some polls, to ascertain that “non-religious liberals”³⁶⁵ have too much control over the Democratic Party, or even pointedly that the Democratic Party is simply “anti-God.”³⁶⁶

Summarizing and interpreting the different arguments, the culture wars, then, are to a certain degree fabricated. The term is “one of journalism’s most abused catchphrases”³⁶⁷; it is invoked by political and religious activists to rally their forces to subscribe to specific causes, and it is exaggerated by a culture wars industry which has created a “culture circus,”³⁶⁸ a form of public entertainment. These excrescences have made Hunter’s thesis vulnerable to criticism. Yet, on another level, deeper than politics, deeper than the simplistic political dichotomies of Republican and Democrat, at a cultural level, behind all the shadowboxing, the culture wars appear to be real. At the level of elites, of political activists, evangelicals, fundamentalists, and committed secularists, the polarization is deep and wide, as different worldviews, different moral authorities, and different ways of life, clash. These groups make up Himmelfarb’s image of “two cul-

³⁶¹ Hunter, “A Response from James Davison Hunter,” 94.

³⁶² Allport, 446.

³⁶³ Cf. Seymour Martin Lipset, *Consensus and Conflict. Essays in Political Sociology* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1985) 279 .

³⁶⁴ The Brookings Institution, “American Politics and the Religious Divide,” Transcript of Panel Discussion, 26 Sept. 26 2006, <http://www.brookings.edu/comm/events/20060926.pdf>.

³⁶⁵ Louis Bolce and Gerald de Maio, “The (In)Sincere Friends of Religion: Is the Democratic Party Anti-God?, *Crisis Magazine*, Jan 2007, 2-7. Cf. also Fowler and Hertzke 97f. Bolce and De Maio here refer to a poll conducted by The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life which found that 44 percent of the population agrees that ‘non-religious liberals’ have too much control over the Democratic Party. Cf. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, “Public Divided on Origins of Life. Religion a Strength and Weakness for Both Parties,” 30 Aug. 2005.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ “Retire the Culture War,” *The Revealer* 26 March 2004, http://www.therevealer.org/archives/daily_000281.php.

³⁶⁸ Klein.

tures”³⁶⁹ within one nation, a state of affairs in which liberals clash with conservatives and progressives with traditionalists, where red staters vie with blue staters, evolutionists battle creationists, zealous Christians face godless atheists, elitist bobos (derived from Bohemian Bourgeoisie) despise hinterlandish yahoos, and so on. Religious, cultural, geographical, and political polarizations all overlap. And though the culture wars have no relevance for considerable portions of the population, the culture war rhetoric emanates into these portions and therefore into the broader society. The fighting factions can thus potentially, from case to case, instigate what Andrew Kohut of the Pew Research Forum calls the “leaners” – about one third of Americans according to his estimation – to join the battle.³⁷⁰ Though certainly not convinced culture warriors, they can thus be regarded as a silent reserve into which the organized forces can tap when calling to arms, as numerous local scuffles show.

One of these originally local cases of cultural warfare was a tussle about the teaching of Intelligent Design in Dover, Pennsylvania, which eventually put the conflict over evolution on the national culture war agenda. The ID controversy, which will be discussed in the next chapter, is a textbook example of the culture wars, as it offered yet another deployment zone for the factions and groups enumerated above, their weapons a harsh and often angry rhetoric, their ideological supplies different notions of science, of knowledge, of truth, based on seemingly diametrically opposing and mutually exclusive worldviews and belief systems, their goal to win the battle for the power to define reality, for the meaning of America.

³⁶⁹ So far, I have refrained from mentioning the concept of multiculturalism at all. For matters of simplicity and a lack of space, I have so far stuck with – and will continue to do so – Hunter’s admittedly simple distinction between orthodox and progressive and the associated categories and labels. Yet, they can be regarded as overarching metaconcepts for the categorization of various societal groups. One could certainly and reasonably justify the subsuming of any group under one of the two banners. However, conservatives in concert with the Religious Right have often brandished liberals, seculars, and whatever label they can come up with (in other words, whichever group they could identify as an opponent) for supporting and propagating multiculturalism, and in the process favoring a variety of other cultures at the cost of Christian culture or, even more broadly, American culture. As Richard John Neuhaus, elaborating on the American culture wars, has put it: “Another form, on the other side, is the celebration of multiculturalism, which is basically saying that there is no culture – Western or American culture – that is worthy of our adherence” (Quoted in: Wuthnow 84). Furthermore, with a look at the multifacetedness and the cultural make-up of the United States, the argument for just “two cultures” is certainly lacking and the two warring camps are hardly marked by cultural cohesion and are certainly not one monolithic, homogeneous cultural bloc. Adding to this, Jim Collins in *Uncommon Cultures* stated: “Culture is no longer a unitary, fixed category, but a decentered assemblage of conflicting voices and institutions.” (Quoted in: Bruce Robbins, “Othering the Academy: Professionalism and Multiculturalism,” *PC Wars. Politics and Theory in the Academy*, ed. Jeffrey Williams (New York: Routledge, 1995) 291). On another note, I have also neglected the topic of popular culture and culture in the form of literature, art, etc. so far in my discussion of the culture wars. Of course, control over the carriers and different forms of popular culture – music, movies, novels – is also contested. Often feeling alienated from popular culture, which they see as dominated by a secular and liberal Hollywood elite, evangelical groups have created a vibrant and expanding subculture with their own mass media outlets (the *Christian Broadcasting Network*, for example, reaches dozens of millions of households as do evangelical radio stations), own newspapers, their own bestsellers (novels such as the *Left Behind* series), their own businesses and brands, Christian rock music, youth organizations, private schools, and universities.

³⁷⁰ Klein.

4. The Intelligent Design Discourse: “Is Man an ape or an angel?”³⁷¹

There are known knowns. There are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns. That is to say, we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns, the ones we don't know we don't know.
—Donald Rumsfeld³⁷²

Facts are stupid things.
—Ronald Reagan³⁷³

TIME Magazine simply calls it the “The Evolution Wars,”³⁷⁴ the Pew Forum the “The Biology Wars,”³⁷⁵ and the *Boston Globe* “God vs. Darwin.”³⁷⁶ The Intelligent Design controversy was the pivotal and most visible cultural battleground in 2005, clearly overshadowing issues such as abortion or gay marriage. Though 2005 was the climax, the “turf battle” still rages on – just subscribe to news about “intelligent design” via Google Alerts and your electronic mailbox will overflow every day of the week – and, if history is any indication, will continue to do so. The discourse about Intelligent Design and its defiance of Darwinism follows an all too familiar scenario of the American culture wars: Evolution and ID are interpreted as being proxies for science and religion, which in turn are key features of the two sides of Hunter’s basic culture wars model. With the escalation and heated rhetoric after Dover, modernity/progressivism and orthodoxy/traditionalism have tightened their chokehold around each others throats. The popular narrative thus once again depicts a conflict over evolution between two competing world views, two claims to final, fundamental truths which make conflict inevitable, fighting over nothing less than the image and the nature of the United States, over the question of whether the US is a Christian nation or a secular state.³⁷⁷ The troops consequently marched to the front line on beaten trails. While more militant Christian groups constantly fulminated against godless Darwinists – with the *Christian Broadcasting Network*, certainly not without ulterior motives, innocently asking “Evolution: Science or Atheism in Disguise”³⁷⁸ – the reaction of what these groups regard as the liberal mainstream media was a mixture of mockery and utter disbelief at the emergence of ID, culminating in the unavoidable headline “Unintelligent Design,” which among others was by the *New York Times* and *Newsweek*.³⁷⁹ In this debate, one side claims

³⁷¹ Former British Prime Minister and author Benjamin Disraeli, reacting to Darwin’s recent theory of evolution and the ensuing – philosophical, theological, scientific, moral – disputes, identified this question as the crux of the matter. His contention that “[i]t is between those two contending interpretations of the nature of man, and their consequences, that society will have to decide.” Though those words echo from the late 19th century, they certainly reverberate today, especially with regard to the ID controversy. Quoted in: Stephen Jay Gould, *Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life* (London: Random House, 2002) 63f.

³⁷² Rumsfeld uttered these words, to which Slate’s Hart Seely referred to as “The Poetry of D. H. Rumsfeld”, at a White House press briefing on February 12, 2002, which incidentally is Darwin’s birthday. Quoted in: Hart Seely, “The Poetry of D. H. Rumsfeld,” 2 April, <http://www.slate.com/id/2081042/>.

³⁷³ Quote taken from *The Quotations page*, 05/27/2006, www.quotationspage.com/quote/279.html.

³⁷⁴ Wallis.

³⁷⁵ The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, “The Biology Wars: The Religion, Science, and Education Controversy,” Event Transcript, <http://pewforum.org/events/index.php?EventID=93>.

³⁷⁶ Cathy Young, “God vs. Darwin: no contest,” *The Boston Globe*, 8 August 2005.

³⁷⁷ Cf. Wilcox, 12-13.

³⁷⁸ Darla Sitton, “Evolution: Science or Atheism in Disguise,” The Christian Broadcasting Network, <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/news/050517d.aspx>.

³⁷⁹ Cf. Jim Holt, “Unintelligent Design,” *New York Times Magazine*, 20 February 2005. Cf. also Richard Dawkins, “Unintelligent Design,” *Newsweek*, 28 November 2005.

to restore and uphold morality and Christian values, while the other purports to be the defender of science and rationality and promises to scotch any theocratic tendencies.

Due to its complexity and multifacetedness, the controversy about Intelligent Design can be tackled in many ways by approaching the topic either from a philosophical perspective, from a scientific point of view, or from a purely legal angle. My emphasis, however, will be on the analysis of the different discourse planes on which the involved societal groups and institutions struggle for power. My research will focus on how these competing groups refer to each other linguistically, how they construct an 'other', how they use specific discursive argumentation schemes to exclude and suppress other groups, what features and traits they attribute to the 'other' and to themselves, what labels they use, and how they wrangle over definitional control over these labels. Furthermore, given that the conflict revolving around Intelligent Design is embedded in a larger frame of conflict between science and religion, the different constitutions and sources of knowledge and how knowledge relates to power and ideology will be central research questions of this work. In accordance with Wodak's credo that CDA is not about the evaluation of who is right and who is wrong in a given discourse, a critical evaluation of the scientific validity of either evolution or ID will not be a main goal of this work.³⁸⁰ Although I support and favor one side of the story, due to the complexity of the matter, I will focus on the public discourse and the way it is conducted, though I will certainly discuss the criticisms directed at both evolution and ID. Owing to my lack of scientific knowledge and training with regard to evolutionary theory, any substantiated statement on my behalf would simply be an uncritical reiteration of the arguments made by someone else.

4.1. The Historical Context: "Under God or under Darwin?"³⁸¹

What is Darwinism? It is atheism.

—Charles Hodge, *What is Darwinism* (1874)³⁸²

To doubt evolution today is to doubt science, and science is only another name for truth.

—Othniel Charles Marsh (1831-1899)³⁸³

As both Hunter and the various scholars of CDA have pointed out, an understanding and examination of the historical roots is indispensable to contextualize and ultimately interpret any current dis-

³⁸⁰ Cf. Wodak, "The discourse-historical approach," 65f. Other scholars of CDA, most notably van Dijk, however propagate that the critical discourse analyst should always write in support of the suppressed side in a social struggle, I would have problems to identify a clear underdog in the ID controversy and the broader culture wars. Taking into account the moderate majority, both sides recruit a huge portion of their supporters from the societal fringes, although they readily cast themselves into the role of the oppressed victim.

³⁸¹ Mustafa Akyol, "Under God or under Darwin?", National Review Online, 2 December 2005, <http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/akyol200512020813.asp>. Since this work deals specifically with the reaction of evangelical Protestantism towards Darwin's theory of evolution, I will exclusively refer to the Christian conception of God and Christian religion in general and consequently not relate my writing to other deities or religions, if not explicitly mentioned.

³⁸² Charles Hodge, "What is Darwinism," *Critical Issues in American Religious History: A Reader*, ed. Robert R. Mathisen (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2001) 312.

³⁸³ Quoted in: Paul A. Carter, "The Ape in the Tree of Knowledge," *Critical Issues in American Religious History: A Reader*, ed. Robert R. Mathisen (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2001) 333. Yale paleontologist Marsh was the leading evolutionary scientist of the US when he was forced to resign from all academic posts in 1890 due to a campaign by conservative Christian congressmen.

cursive event. Hunter's culture wars model serves as the explanatory model for the broader social context of the current conflict over evolution as well as its historical derivation, which he depicts as the reaction of the religiously orthodox against the theory of evolution and modernism in the 1920s.³⁸⁴ Hence, ever since the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859, his theory has been at the center of a perceived conflict between science and religion, with warfare, as historian of religion Marsden puts it, being "the dominant popular image."³⁸⁵ Although these two different notions of explaining the world have clashed before, of which the Galileo case is the best known example, before Darwin entered the stage, science and religion were generally regarded as being in full harmony and as being complementary to one another:

Religious leaders had, since Newton, insisted on linking science and God. In the half century before Darwin, the certainty of knowledge of God through science had been drummed into Christians more insistently than ever before.³⁸⁶

After Darwin, many in the clergy as well as other Christians involved in science were forced to change their outlook. Instead of trying to prove God and his works through science, they now had to focus on showing that science does not disprove God's existence. Though Darwin himself was a devout Christian and still a creationist when he set foot on the Galapagos Islands – he stated that he "had no intention to write atheistically"³⁸⁷ – his belief in a deity was shattered after he had conceived his theory of evolution: "But I own that I cannot see as plainly as others do, and as I should wish to do, evidence of design and beneficence on all sides of us."³⁸⁸

Darwinism³⁸⁹ and *The Origin of Species* shook the foundations of Christian belief and religion in general by stating that organisms evolved over time through natural selection and that all present life forms descended from a common ancestor, to name just the most important tenets of evolution, thus negating the role of an omnipotent designer in the creation of mankind and grandly reducing the role of God.³⁹⁰ Not surprisingly then, the theory of evolution was attacked from the beginning.

³⁸⁴ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 138f.

³⁸⁵ Marsden, 177.

³⁸⁶ James Turner, "The Intellectual Crisis of Belief," *Critical Issues in American Religious History: A Reader*, ed. Robert R. Mathisen (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2001) 343.

³⁸⁷ Edward J. Larsson, *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate Over Science and Religion* (New York: Basic Books, 1997) 17.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.* However, Darwin was not an atheist and did not positively deny the existence of God. Instead, he identified more with the position of an agnostic, a term T. H. Huxley, who was nicknamed "Darwin's Bulldog," had coined. Agnostics simply assert that the questions pertaining to the existence of God and other deities cannot be answered and that a scientific inquiry is thus futile, resulting in what Turner describes as "a permanent suspension of belief in God" (Cf. Turner 335; cf. also Marsden 135).

³⁸⁹ In the historical context, "Darwinism" and "evolution" will be used interchangeably. Though the theory of evolution today has evolved from Darwin's evolutionary concepts and features a multitude of new scientific findings, and though "Darwinism" connotes a quasi-philosophical theory and ideology – which by opponents was often disparagingly equated with atheism, "survival of the fittest" (Social Darwinism), and negative effects of secularization while its adherents understood it as a naturalistic worldview – behind the scientific theory of evolution, the two terms were used freely and commonly as synonyms outside scientific discourse. While the scientific community does not use the term "Darwinism," the usage prolongs until today as critics still try to picture scientists who advance Darwin's theory of evolution as members of an anti-Christian ideology and belief system.

³⁹⁰ For a basic outline of the central tenets of evolutionary theory, cf. Michael Shermer, *Why Darwin Matters* (New York: Times Books, 2006) 7f.

Starting in Great Britain, Darwinists such as T. H. Huxley, nicknamed “Darwin’s Bulldog,” engaged in panel discussions about the implications of evolution with members of the clergy and Christian scientists. Darwin’s theory quickly spread and was warmly, if not enthusiastically, received by many in the natural sciences and other academic disciplines. Hence, “by the end of the 1860s, science had little use for God.”³⁹¹ With the publication of Charles Hodge’s *What is Darwinism* (1874), the “Evolution Wars” reached the United States. The Princeton theologian set out for a full-fledged attack on Darwinism, epitomizing the central fault lines and perceptions of the conflict:

The conclusion of the whole matter is, that the denial of design in nature is virtually the denial of God. Mr. Darwin’s theory is virtually atheistical; his theory, not he himself. He believes in a Creator. But when that Creator, millions on millions of ages ago, did something – called matter and a living germ into existence – and then abandoned the universe to itself to be controlled by chance and necessity, without any purpose on his part as to the result, or any intervention or guidance, then He is virtually consigned, so far as we are concerned, to nonexistence....This is the vital point. The denial of final causes is the formative idea of Darwin’s theory, and therefore no teleologist can be a Darwinian....We have thus arrived at the answer to our question, What is Darwinism? It is Atheism.³⁹²

Others quickly joined the choir. Writing in the *Catholic World*, Joseph Bayma, a mathematician and philosopher, contended that “Mr. Darwin is, we have reason to believe, the mouthpiece or chief trumpeter of that infidel clique whose well-known object is to do away with all idea of a God.”³⁹³ *Scribner’s Monthly* declared that Darwinian evolution was “nothing more than a provisional hypothesis” and was not based “on any valid induction of facts,”³⁹⁴ a form of criticism which would find an echo in the current conflict about evolution. Answering this criticism, Herbert Spencer simply noted that those criticizing evolution “seem quite to forget that their own theory is supported by no facts at all.”³⁹⁵ As these statements show, the criticism thwarted at Darwin and the adherents of his theory of evolution – either called evolutionists or Darwinists, or, by more militant opponents, simply atheists or infidels – was focused not so much on the scientific validity, but was motivated more by cultural, religious and political factors as well as a fear of the implications of Darwinism: a modern world in which God was a thing of the past. Its harshest and most vocal critics unhinged Darwinism from a purely scientific context and catapulted it into the arena of morals and beliefs where it was simply brandished as atheism.

Yet, the scientific community was not utterly innocent in the escalation of the conflict. On the contrary: O.C. Marsh, the leading evolutionist in the USA, led the way when he declared that “[t]o doubt evolution today is to doubt science, and science is only another name for truth.”³⁹⁶ Adding fuel to the flames, two books by academicians from New York, John William Draper’s *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science* (1874) and Andrew Dickinson White’s *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (1898), were especially influential in creating and fully depict-

³⁹¹ Turner, 337.

³⁹² Hodge, 312

³⁹³ Quoted in: Andrew Dickinson White, “The Final Effort of Theology,” *Critical Issues in American Religious History: A Reader*, ed. Robert R. Mathisen (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2001) 323.

³⁹⁴ Quoted in: Paul A. Carter, 331.

³⁹⁵ Quoted in: Shermer, 45.

³⁹⁶ Quoted in: Paul A. Carter, 333.

ing the image of warfare between enlightened science based on reason and backward, superstitious religion. Draper called his book “a narrative of the conflict of two contending powers, the expansive force of the human intellect on one side, and the compression arising from traditional faith and human interests on the other.”³⁹⁷ This warfare metaphor gained a wide acceptance among scientists. Tess Cosslett noted that in “their bid to take over the cultural leadership of the country, they constructed a complete ‘scientific worldview’ to rival and supplant the world-view of Christianity.”³⁹⁸ By the end of the nineteenth century, the theory of evolution had become the chief symbol for naturalistic science and modernity. While it accelerated the secularization of American society, religion was losing ground and the implications of the theory of evolution often ignited an intellectual crisis in the minds of Christian scientists and the clergy.³⁹⁹ Some tried to reconcile evolution and more generally science with Christian beliefs. Theologian Henry Ward Beecher was the “chief popularizer”⁴⁰⁰ of this modernist current within the Protestant community. He and other more liberal leaders of the mainline churches asserted that belief in God was a matter of the heart and that religion “dealt with a higher level of truth than science.”⁴⁰¹ Yet, conservative leaders and groups within the Protestant community refused to accept evolution and the ongoing secularization of US society. Trying to uphold their cultural dominance while attempting to defend traditional Christianity from the liberal tendencies of Beecher and his allies and modern science, these groups came to be known as fundamentalists, named after the aforementioned series of booklets called *The Fundamentals*.⁴⁰²

4.1.1. Of Monkeys, Yokels, and Infidels: The Scopes Trial and *Inherit the Wind*

If evolution wins, Christianity goes – not suddenly, but gradually, for the two cannot stand together.
—William Jennings Bryan, *Scopes Trial*⁴⁰³

We have the purpose of preventing bigots and ignoramuses from controlling the education of the United States... and that is all.
—Clarence Darrow, *Scopes Trial*⁴⁰⁴

While the first reactions to Darwinism were mainly confined to the scientific community and members of the clergy, a popular arousal in the United States followed in the 1920s. The catalyst for the broader societal attack on the theory of evolution was its teaching in high school biology classes, introduced by recent graduates who had learned about it at their respective universities where the concepts of natural selection and common descent were by now accepted as common sense.⁴⁰⁵ Yet, they carried their knowledge into an environment which was accustomed and thus adhered to a

³⁹⁷ Quoted in: Larson, 21.

³⁹⁸ Tess Cosslett, *Science and Religion in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 10.

³⁹⁹ Cf. Robert R. Mathisen, “Religion and Science in Confrontation,” *Critical Issues in American Religious History: A Reader*, ed. Robert R. Mathisen (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2001) 307. Cf. also Marsden 12f.

⁴⁰⁰ Marsden, 18.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 139.

⁴⁰² Ibid., 179.

⁴⁰³ Quoted in: Wilcox, 23.

⁴⁰⁴ Quoted in: Larson, 6.

⁴⁰⁵ Cf. Larson, 22f.

completely different, diametrically opposed form of knowledge. In many parts of the country, the Bible was still interpreted very literally and what Marsden calls “American folk Christianity” dominated everyday life.⁴⁰⁶ Especially the South was a fundamentalist stronghold, and those assembled under the banner of fundamentalism saw their engagement with modernity and the liberal tendencies in mainline denominations through images of warfare:

...they found little difficulty in linking evolution with atheism, secularistic trends, “godless education,” sexual immorality, disintegration of the family, German militarism, and Communism. In their vocabulary, evolution became a catchall, scare word meaning modern evils in general. One zealot even insisted upon spelling it “devolution”.⁴⁰⁷

Evolution thus had been picked as a proxy for everything that was wrong, everything that was deemed un-Christian and un-American. Furthermore, the conflict over evolution also served as a contact zone for “widely dissimilar mentalities which had previously operated virtually independent of each other at different levels in American culture.”⁴⁰⁸

By 1919, fundamentalist and evangelical groups had started a crusade against the teaching of evolution in schools. Not only did Darwinism attack Christianity, they argued, it should also not be taught as science since the theory was unprovable.⁴⁰⁹ Under the pressure of a broad movement backed up by creationist organizations such as the Anti-Evolution League, many states passed laws outlawing the teaching of evolution in the 1920s. The pivotal and best known showdown between evolution and creationism was the Scopes trial, also known as the “monkey trial,” which kept the small city of Dayton, Tennessee, as well as the whole nation in suspense during the summer of 1925. As recounted in every schoolbook today, John Scopes, a young biology teacher, was on trial for teaching the theory of evolution and thus violating Tennessee’s Butler Act, which outlawed the instruction of “any theory that denies the story of the divine creation of man as taught in the Bible.”⁴¹⁰ By then, the warfare model had become the paradigmatic explanation for the relationship between science and religion, and this model was evident in the trial, which was stylized into a “battle for humanity’s soul.”⁴¹¹ In the forefront of the trial, the World’s Christian Fundamentals Association had already praised the state of Tennessee for “prohibiting the teaching of the unscientific, anti-Christian, atheistic, anarchistic, pagan, rationalist evolutionary theory.”⁴¹² As Edward Larson in *Summer for the Gods* shows, the trial was actually a test case, conceived by the ACLU to test and challenge anti-evolution state laws.⁴¹³ Scopes enlisted as “a willing client,”⁴¹⁴ or, using Gould’s metaphors, “the

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. Marsden, 136.

⁴⁰⁷ Willard B. Gatewood, “Controversy in the Twenties: Fundamentalism, Modernism, and Evolution,” *Critical Issues in American Religious History: A Reader*, ed. Robert R. Mathisen (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2001) 460.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. ibid.

⁴¹⁰ Wording of the law taken from: David A. Horowitz, *America’s Political Class Under Fire: The Twentieth Century’s Great Culture War* (New York: Routledge, 2003) 22.

⁴¹¹ Shermer, 23.

⁴¹² Quoted in: Larson, 97.

⁴¹³ Cf. Larson 88. The ACLU took out ads, actively looking for a Tennessee teacher who was willing to go on trial, defended by the ACLU, to challenge the so-called Butler Act.

guinea pig or stalking horse,”⁴¹⁵ and soon found himself in court, defended by Clarence Darrow, then the most-famous American trial lawyer, on behalf of the ACLU. He was pitted against William Jennings Bryan, a former Democratic presidential candidate, progressive on social issues and known as “The Great Commoner” for his commitment to the common people. To both, the question of whether Scope, who never testified and was ordered to pay a small fine, was guilty was only of secondary concern. Though Bryan also attacked the scientific validity of Darwinism – using an antiquated definition of science, he concluded that Darwinism was just “guesses strung together”⁴¹⁶ and thus only a rival belief system, – his main line of attack reverberated the reasoning of the author of Tennessee’s anti-evolution law, who had already exclaimed that he regarded “evolution to be the greatest menace to civilization in the world today. It [...] makes Jesus Christ a faker.”⁴¹⁷ In his closing statement, Bryan, who before the trial had stated that he came to defend revealed religion, decried that evolution is an attack not only on orthodox Christianity but religion in general – by urban elites and academics, a conspiracy of atheists and agnostics, believers of Darwinism, who aimed at ridding society of its Christian morals and values.⁴¹⁸ His repeated favorite punch line was: “How can teachers tell students that they came from monkeys and not expect them to act like monkeys?”⁴¹⁹ For the defense, Darrow followed a three-pronged strategy: defend the individual academic freedom to teach evolution while pointing out that the instruction of creationism violated the separation of church and state, prove the scientific authority of Darwinism through the testimony of scientists, and, most notably, “a mocking ridicule of fundamentalists and biblical literalism.”⁴²⁰ Darrow’s scorching rhetoric equaled that of Bryan as he attacked him for his belief in a “fool religion” no intelligent and educated man would and could share.⁴²¹ The press, who had created a discursive mega event by sending dozens of journalists to the small city of Dayton and, unheard of before, by broadcasting the trial live on radio, gratefully picked up Darrow’s defense strategy in editorials nationwide, yet focusing on the mockery part of it.⁴²² Seemingly intent on pitting conservative Christians against secular modernists, the mass media caricatured the former as “rubes and hicks”⁴²³ from the southern hinterland. H. L. Mencken, who covered the trial for the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Baltimore Sun*, was especially notorious for putting down everybody who believed in creationism. Hunter and Winnick bothered to enumerate the labels and names he used: “yokels,” “hillbillies,” “gaping primates,” “half-wits,” or “Ku Klux theologians.”⁴²⁴ His descriptions of the trial were very vivid, yet always biased:

⁴¹⁴ Pamela R. Winnick, *A Jealous God: Science’s Crusade Against Religion* (Nashville: Nelson Current, 2005) 101.

⁴¹⁵ Gould, 134.

⁴¹⁶ Quoted in: Larson, 42.

⁴¹⁷ Quoted in: Hunter, “A Response from James Davison Hunter,” 138.

⁴¹⁸ Cf. Shermer, 23. Cf. also Larson, 4f. and Horowitz, 28.

⁴¹⁹ Quoted in: Larson, 116.

⁴²⁰ Larson, 53. Cf. also Larson, 174f.

⁴²¹ Cf. Larson, 5.

⁴²² Ibid., 142.

⁴²³ Marsden, 60.

⁴²⁴ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 141f. Cf. also Winnick, 104.

It serves notice on the country the Neanderthal man is organizing in these forlorn backwaters of the land, led by a fanatic [MenckenWilliam Jennings Bryan], rid of sense and devoid of conscience.⁴²⁵

A later study about the media coverage of the trial came to the conclusion that the press was clearly biased in favor of the pro-evolution side. The few notable exceptions among the journalists retaliated in kind: a reporter for the *New York World* described the army surrounding Scopes as “feminists, birth-control advocates, agnostics, atheists, free thinkers, free lovers, socialists, communists, (...) biologists, (...) educators, (...) professional liberals, and many others, including just talkers.”⁴²⁶

As Hunter has observed, both sides shared “a pattern of image building and accusation,”⁴²⁷ using almost identical language, similar discursive strategies and simplistic binary stereotypes, picturing themselves simultaneously as victims and as a member of the moderate majority while trying to exclude their opponents from that middle ground by portraying them as intolerant extremists.⁴²⁸ Hence, Marsden noted, the “most important impact of the Scopes trial [...] was the image that it created.”⁴²⁹ According to Larson, the battle over its legacy started immediately after the trial had ended.⁴³⁰ The direct aftermath saw many more states adopt laws outlawing the teaching of evolution, and at first, the anti-evolution crusade continued unabated.⁴³¹ Yet, within the following decade, what Larson calls “The Modern Scopes Legend” became the popular narrative purported by the mass media. The trial, as novelist Irving Stone wrote, had “dealt a deathblow to Fundamentalism.”⁴³² Science and rationality stood as the shining winners. The legend was especially shaped by the Broadway play *Inherit the Wind* (1955), which was adapted as an enormously popular Hollywood film in 1960, “a tale of tolerant science versus divisive religion”⁴³³ which reconstructed the events of the ‘Monkey Trial’ to transport the image of science emerging as a victor out of the war with religion.⁴³⁴ However, while the mass media and Hollywood consolidated the legend and *Inherit the Wind* supplied the view many Americans still have of the Scopes trial, anti-evolutionism continued to reign in the southern part of the US, where evangelical Christians separated themselves from mainstream America and formed their own subculture, complete with their own schools and universities which spawned a new creationist scientific establishment.⁴³⁵

The images, labels and stereotypes of the Scopes trial resonate until today and serve as a paradigmatic explanatory model for subsequent conflicts over evolution: a clash between unreasonable fundamentalist religion and rational science. Yet, a competing interpretation saw the trial as a showdown between arrogant anti-Christian science and traditional Christian belief.

⁴²⁵ Quoted in: Shermer, 26.

⁴²⁶ Quoted in: Larson, 112.

⁴²⁷ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 143.

⁴²⁸ Ibid. 144f.

⁴²⁹ Marsden, 197.

⁴³⁰ Cf. Larson, 223.

⁴³¹ Ibid., 222f.

⁴³² Quoted in: Larson, 229.

⁴³³ Witham, 34.

⁴³⁴ Cf. Winnick, 108.

⁴³⁵ Cf. Larson, 232f.

4.1.2. No More Monkey Business: The Creationist Cosmos Evolves

Well, it is a theory, a scientific theory only, and it has in recent years been challenged in the world of science.
—Ronald Reagan, referring to evolution during the 1980 presidential campaign⁴³⁶

Like the waves of the broader culture wars, the conflict over evolution seems to follow specific tides and waxes and wanes in cycles. After Scopes, scuffles over evolution persisted on a smaller, local scale without much media attention since the “elite American society [had] stopped taking fundamentalists and their ideas seriously.”⁴³⁷ After World War II, anti-evolutionists developed their own “Creation Science” within their evangelical subculture. Within the creationist camp, different subgroups – Young Earth Creationists (YEC), Old Earth Creationists, Progressive Creationists, Theistic Evolutionists, and others⁴³⁸ – discussed and disputed different concepts. The basic tenets of YEC, for example, were that the earth and all life were created by God within the last 10,000 years. Though the movement was dealt a blow when the Supreme Court in *Epperson v. Arkansas* ruled the state’s anti-evolution law and thus all anti-evolution laws nationwide unconstitutional, the creationist movement just changed their tactics.⁴³⁹ Arguing that creationism was a valid and well-grounded scientific theory advanced by professional scientists and think tanks while congruently brandishing Darwinism as a quasi-religious belief in turn, they demanded creationism to be taught alongside evolution as an alternative theory.⁴⁴⁰ By 1971, the first state had introduced a bill in support of creationism, and many states followed. The early 1980s saw a new resurgence of creationism. Running for president, Ronald Reagan openly endorsed the teaching of creationism alongside evolution. Yet, in *McClean v. Arkansas Board of Education* (1982), a federal district court struck down the Arkansas “balanced treatment” statute which required the instruction of creation science.⁴⁴¹ In 1987, it was once again the Supreme Court which seemingly stopped the creationist ambitions in *Edwards v. Aguillard* by ruling that “[c]reation science was nothing but religion dressed up as science.”⁴⁴² All these three cases have either been dubbed “Scopes 2” or “Son of Scopes” at one point or another and have followed the argumentative pattern and discursive scenario of the original Scopes trial, repeating the familiar stereotypes.⁴⁴³ Yet, as Gould pointed out, in the face of the continuing challenges to evolution and the evident vitality of creationism, the legend of science having delivered “a deathblow” to fundamentalism could not be upheld.⁴⁴⁴ Dissenting in *Edwards v. Aguillard*, Justice Antonin Scalia, a conservative Reagan-appointee, even echoed the criticism of

⁴³⁶ Quoted in: Nicholas Thompson, “Science Friction,” *Washington Monthly* January/February 2007, <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2003/0307.thompson.html>.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, 233.

⁴³⁸ For a complete list, cf. Shermer, 166f.

⁴³⁹ Cf. David Masci, “From Darwin to Dover: An Overview of Important Cases in the Evolution Debate,” *The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life*, 2005.

⁴⁴⁰ Cf. James Moore, “The Creationist Cosmos of Protestant Fundamentalism,” *Fundamentalisms and Society. Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993) 51. Cf. also Winnick, 143.

⁴⁴¹ Cf. Masci.

⁴⁴² Larson, 271.

⁴⁴³ Cf. Winnick, 142. Cf. also Gould, 141.

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. Larson, 245.

evangelical Christians by asserting that “Darwinists” were adherents of “the religion of secular humanism” and “that teaching evolution alone promoted atheism,”⁴⁴⁵ a theme which would be a vital part in future struggles over evolution.

The creationist cosmos had thus become a powerful alternative reality, a counterhegemonic worldview which constantly tries to challenge and subvert what they call Darwinism and others call evolution – both in the spheres of culture and science.⁴⁴⁶ While modern science repeatedly claims victory in the courts, under the impression of yet another attack on the theory of evolution in the form of Intelligent Design, the words of conservative Christian author Larry A. Witham ring true: “But after a calm, the gale returns.”⁴⁴⁷

4.2. ‘Dance Like A Monkey’: The Contemporary Context

Will it never end?

—Larry Witham, *Where Darwin Meets the Bible*⁴⁴⁸

The broader contemporary conflict over evolution and creationism started in the small town of Dover, Pennsylvania, when, on October 18, the Dover Area School Board passed the following resolution: “Students will be made aware of gaps/problems in Darwin’s theory and of other theories of evolution, including, but not limited to, intelligent design.”⁴⁴⁹ On November 19, the school board declared that biology teachers at Dover High School were required to read a disclaimer to their ninth grade students, which stated that “Darwin’s Theory is a theory” and “not a fact,”⁴⁵⁰ while ID was a viable alternative. The disclaimer furthermore explicitly mentioned *Of Pandas and People* as a reference book for information on ID.⁴⁵¹ On December 14, eleven parents⁴⁵² of Dover High School students filed a lawsuit, contending that the teaching of Intelligent Design violated the constitutional separation of church and state, because ID propagated a religious worldview and thus constituted an establishment of religion, which was prohibited in the First Amendment.⁴⁵³ In a parallel to the Scopes trial, the plaintiffs were defended by lawyers paid by the ACLU, while the Thomas More Law Center (TMLC), which calls itself the “Christian Answer to the ACLU” and the “sword and shield for people of faith,”⁴⁵⁴ has inherited the role of “defenders of the faith” from Bryan. In many other states and counties, proponents of Intelligent Design followed the example of the Dover School Board and challenged that scientific authority of the theory of evolution by trying to insert ID into the curriculum

⁴⁴⁵ Quoted in: Winnick, 151.

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. Moore, 62.

⁴⁴⁷ Witham, 3.

⁴⁴⁸ Witham, 3.

⁴⁴⁹ Judge John E. Jones III, Case No. 04cv2688, *Tammy Kitzmiller et al. v. Dover Area School District*, Memorandum Opinion, 20 Dec. 2005, p. 1. The decision by Judge Jones provides a detailed timeline of the events surrounding the Dover case. Yet, the conflict over evolution always seems to linger in the United States: just before the Dover case, the school board of Cobb county, Georgia, for example introduced a disclaimer stating that “evolution is just a theory (Cf. Larson, 275).

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² Among them was Tammy Kitzmiller, thus the trial name *Tammy Kitzmiller et al. Dover Area School District et al.*

⁴⁵³ *Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School Board*, 2.

⁴⁵⁴ Cf. Shermer, 100.

of public schools. In Kansas, the state school board for example voted to redefine the science standards with the goal to introduce ID into the curriculum.⁴⁵⁵

The challenge of evolution by Intelligent Design fell on fruitful ground within the broader public of the United States. A recent survey by *The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life* (August 2006) once again showed that 42 percent of the respondents agreed with the creationist view that “Humans and other living things have existed in present form only”⁴⁵⁶ while 51 percent believed that humans evolved over time. Yet, only 26 percent of the later group stated that this occurred through natural selection and 21 percent agreed that the process of evolution was guided by a supreme being. Furthermore, while 28 percent of evangelicals accepted evolution, only 6 percent of them believed that humans evolved through natural selection. Consolidating the now familiar fault lines of the culture wars, those who identified as seculars delivered the opposite picture: 82 percent believed that humans evolved over time, 69 percent stated that this happened through natural selection.⁴⁵⁷ These numbers have been steady throughout the last decades. Even more worrisome for the scientific community, a similar poll conducted one year earlier found that 62 percent believed that either parents or school boards should decide on how evolution is taught, while only 28 percent would place that decision into the hands of scientists and teachers. Certainly to the delight of the Intelligent Design movement (IDM) and the creationist camp, 64 percent of the respondents also favored teaching creationism in public schools. Even a majority (55 percent) of seculars favored such a measure, yet they differed by stating it should be taught alongside evolution, while evangelicals clearly favored replacing it with creationism in public schools.⁴⁵⁸

The same poll also unearthed that only 54 percent of the respondents believed that scientists agreed on whether evolution through natural selection occurred or not. In a Gallup Poll conducted in 1996, 40 percent of the polled scientists indeed denoted their belief that God guided the process of evolution, including humankind’s creation.⁴⁵⁹ This number is a bit misleading though: The category “scientist” in the Gallup Poll was very broad and did not make any distinction between the scientific and academic backgrounds of the respondents. Other polls have shown that while mathematicians or engineers for example are far more likely to believe both in God and his guidance of the process of evolution, biologists, physicists, astronomers and social scientists have very high rates of disbelief.⁴⁶⁰ While polls repeatedly show that between 80 and more than 90 percent of the US population possesses a belief in God, this number reverses in the group of elite scientists who are members of

⁴⁵⁵ The *State Net Capital Journal* reported that in 2005 alone, 10 other states had considered ID legislations. This number does not even include attempts to insert ID into the curriculum at the local level. Cf. Rich Ehsen, “Evolution debate nothing new for states,” *State Net Capital Journal*, Volume XIII, No. 32, 26 Sept. 2005.

⁴⁵⁶ *The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life and The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press*, “Many Americans Uneasy with Mix of Religion and Politics,” 24 Aug. 2006, 15.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 15f. In the survey, seculars self-identified as those without a religious affiliation.

⁴⁵⁸ *The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life*, “Public Divided on Origins of Life. Religion a Strength and Weakness for Both Parties,” 30 Aug. 2005, 7ff.

⁴⁵⁹ Witham, 53f.

⁴⁶⁰ Cf. Natalie Angier, “Survey of Scientists Finds Stability of Faith in God,” *New York Times* 3 April 1997. Cf. also Bruce, 108f.

the National Academy of Scientists (NAS).⁴⁶¹ Another survey polling 271 eminent evolutionary scientists found that the vast majority billed themselves as pure naturalists and regarded religion as a byproduct of human evolution. The latter might explain why only 10 percent see an inevitable conflict between religion and science/evolution.⁴⁶² Harvard Biologist E. O. Wilson sums up the sentiment of the community of evolutionary scientists in two sentences: “The human mind evolved to believe on the gods. It did not evolve to believe in biology.”⁴⁶³

Finally, one year later, on December 20, 2005, John E. Jones III, a conservative judge appointed by George W. Bush, decided the case in favor of the plaintiffs. In his opinion, Jones declares that, first of all, “ID is not science” because it invokes and permits a “supernatural causation,”⁴⁶⁴ and secondly, that “ID’s religious nature is evident because it involves a supernatural designer.”⁴⁶⁵ Yet, in between the decision of the board and of the judge, a debate raged – about the nature of ID and evolution, about morals, about religion, about the nature of the America –, and a corresponding discourse was carried out with a vivid, sometimes vicious verve, which is still raging on until today.

4.3. Discussing Dover: “A Town At War”⁴⁶⁶ over “God or Gorilla”⁴⁶⁷

It divided families, neighbors, and churches.

—Edward Larson, *Summer for the Gods*⁴⁶⁸

As expected, upon a first reading of various sources and texts the actions and reactions of the different actors in the contemporary scuffle seemed very familiar and predictable from a historical perspective. The Scopes trial had set a powerful interpretative antecedent, a vivid master frame, to which the reporting of the Dover case strictly adhered. Furthermore, as we will see in the subsequent discourse analysis, like the Scopes trial, contemporary creation-evolution debates

... are often an entrance point to talk about, really, other things. They use the language of ‘scientific research’ or ‘faithfulness to the Bible,’ but they’re not talking about these things. They are talking about social and political power.⁴⁶⁹

The perceived warfare between science and religion, the Scopes trial as an interpretative guide, and the battle over control of the contents of public education as part of the larger culture wars frame then are the central reference points for my analysis of the discourse on Intelligent Design, which I consider a cultural rather than a scientific debate. My following analysis will nevertheless mostly focus on the discourse plane of science, which provides the argumentative texture for the discourse planes of the mass media and various subcultural discourse planes. The texts and dis-

⁴⁶¹ Cf. Edward J. Larson and Larry A. Witham, “Leading Scientists Still reject God,” *Nature*, Vol. 394, No. 6691, 313.

⁴⁶² Cf. Gregory W. Graffin and William B. Provine, “Evolution, Religion, and Free Will,” *American Scientist* Volume 95, Number 4, July-August 2007.

⁴⁶³ Quoted in: Witham, 40.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., 64.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid., 29.

⁴⁶⁶ Bill Hewitt, Sean Scully, and Nicole Weisensee Egan, “A Town At War,” *TIME Magazine*, 31 Oct. 2005.

⁴⁶⁷ Matthew Chapman, “God or Gorilla,” *Harper’s Magazine*, February 2006, 54-63.

⁴⁶⁸ Larson, 278. Larson here referred to the Dover case.

⁴⁶⁹ Historian Mark Noll, quoted in: Witham, 142.

course fragments subsumed in the special discourse plane of science will include both discourse fragments from scientific publications as well as Op-Eds from mass media outlets and articles from websites. My main criterion for considering a discourse fragment as part of the special discourse of the sciences is whether it was produced by a scientist or for a scientific audience, not whether the fragment only includes scientific arguments. Thus, this plane also includes the different discourse strands between the actors of the ID movement and scientists over evolution and ID, over the definition of science, over the relationship between science and religion. Furthermore, although almost all analyzed texts and discourse fragments are transmitted and produced via some sort of media, the mass media discourse constitutes a separate discourse plane, as the mass media function as an agenda setter and determine which groups will get a voice and how various topics are framed. Finally, I will look at two examples of subcultural discourse which were apart from the dominant and powerful discourse of the mass media. As acknowledged by CDA, the different discourse planes of course overlap and determine one another. For each plane, I will pick out a few exemplary texts from the sheer endless amount of Op-Eds or blogs, from which I will then draw general conclusions for the relevant discourse plane at large. There are of course other discourse planes – special ones like those of philosophy or law and most notably that of politics. Yet, the political discourse about ID did not make a lot of headlines. Though President Bush openly supported the teaching of ID alongside the theory of evolution, which is also supported by a majority of Americans, most politicians have not been very vocal about this controversial topic. This is understandable, as most politicians want to avoid becoming a target of ridicule, which a partial endorsement of ID coupled with a challenge of evolution would almost certainly entail. Yet, science author Chris Mooney for example sees a general war on science on part of the Republican Party, besides evolution on issues like stem cells, global warming, and abortion, and there is certainly a considerable portion within the GOP that is at least sympathetic to ID, most notably Senators Sam Brownback and Rick Santorum, both ultra-conservative Christians, who clearly support the teaching of ID while simultaneously attacking evolution.⁴⁷⁰ However, keeping Hunter's bon mot that "culture determines politics" in mind, the discourses of the science community and of the different subcultures are probably the most vital and interesting parts of the broader societal discourse and will thus share the limelight of my work.

⁴⁷⁰ Chris Mooney, *The Republican War on Science* (New York: Basic Books, 2005). Both Brownback and Santorum have sponsored ID respectively anti-evolution legislation. In a foreword to *Darwin's Nemesis*, a book celebrating ID chief architect Philip Johnson, Santorum referred to Neo-Darwinism as a "false philosophy" which is characterized by a "thoroughly unscientific denial of formal and final causes in nature and its repudiation of the first cause of all being." Cf. Rick Santorum, "Foreword," *Darwin's Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 10.

4.3.1. ID in Science Discourse

As for science versus religion, I'm issuing a restraining order. Religion must stay 500 feet away from science at all times.
—Judge Snyder, *The Simpsons*⁴⁷¹

Modern science abolishes as mere fiction the innermost foundations of our natural world: it kills God and takes his place on the vacant throne, so henceforth it would be science that would hold the order of being in its hand as its sole legitimate guardian and so be the legitimate arbiter of all relevant truth.⁴⁷²

—Vaclav Havel

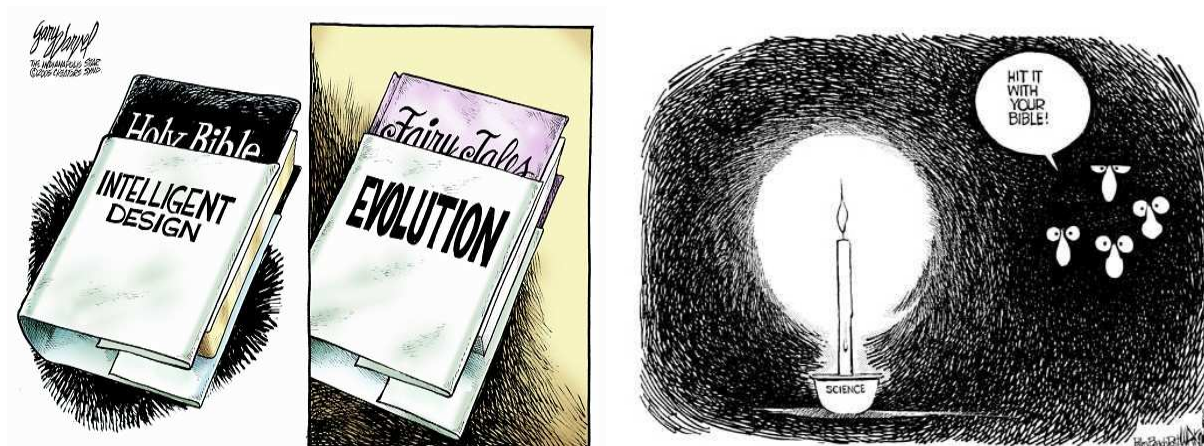


Fig. 2. Cartoon No. 1 is from Sahotra Sarkar's blog: http://webapp.utexas.edu/blogs/archives/sarkalab/cat_onward_christian_soldiers.html, 01/30/2006. Cartoon 2 is by cartoonist Don Wright. Found at: <http://www.liberty-news.com/showNewsletter.php?id=200505271&src=>, 04/16/2007.

Although the scientific discourse on evolution usually takes place in a separate sphere and requires specialized language and knowledge, the challenge posed by the Intelligent Design movement had forced the hand of evolutionary scientists. As noted before, the image of warfare between science and religion has become a paradigmatic interpretative frame – and I expect this view to be evident in the science discourse as well. From my initial reading of the sources, the gist of the conflict about ID comes down to the idea conveyed in the cartoons: evolutionary scientists view ID as directly inspired by the Holy Bible and feel besieged by anti-evolutionist Bible-thumpers, while the proponents of Intelligent Design equate the theory of evolution as propagated by today's biologists and scientists with just another belief system and, pointedly expressed, fairy tales. Thus, from this starting assumption, the discourse of the competing camps will likely neglect scientific arguments in favor for excursions into culture, religion, and philosophy to eventually succeed in this quest for power.

In the following, I will take a closer look at the discursive strategies of both the Intelligent Design movement and the broader science community.⁴⁷³ Since the IDM has been the instigator with its challenge of the scientific status quo on evolution, I will analyze their rhetoric and their argumenta-

⁴⁷¹ Quote posted by user Eric Paulsen on March 15, 2005 in the comment section of the Washington Monthly. http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/archives/individual/2005_03/005847.php.

⁴⁷² Quoted in: Jim Holt, "Madness About a Method," *New York Times Magazine*, 11 Dec. 2005.

⁴⁷³ The term science community, even with the accompanying adjective 'broader', is the appropriate term here as there is a broad consensus on evolution and as Intelligent Design is opposed by all major scientific associations and organizations. In his decision of the Dover case, Judge Jones described the status quo on evolution in detail. Cf. *Tammy Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School Board*, 68f.

tive strategies first before looking at the reaction of the science community.⁴⁷⁴

4.3.1.1. “Darwin On Trial”:⁴⁷⁵ The Rhetoric of the Intelligent Design Movement

[Intelligent Design] means we affirm God is objectively real as creator, that the reality of God is tangibly recorded in evidence accessible to science, particularly biology. —Philip Johnson, *Darwin on Trial*⁴⁷⁶

It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so.
—Mark Twain⁴⁷⁷

The proponents of Intelligent Design have successfully put their concept on the national agenda. ID posited a challenge to evolution not only in the Dover case, but subsequently in many other states throughout the nation. ID is getting media coverage and, as proven by various polls, the public thinks that the scientific community is also divided about evolution and favors the teaching of it alongside evolution. Yet, though Intelligent Design as an organized movement is relatively new, the basic idea behind ID has been around for a while. Some within the ID movement go back as far as Aristotle, who pondered about purpose and agency in nature, and Plato to claim a historic yet philosophical predecessor.⁴⁷⁸ In 1691, John Ray, in his book *Wisdom of God Manifested in Works of Creation*, referred to God as the “intelligent Architect or Engineer” of the “Works of nature,”⁴⁷⁹ while in 1802, theologian John Paley published his *Natural Theology*, what Shermer calls the “first brand of Intelligent Design,”⁴⁸⁰ and introduced the idea of a designer, using the now famous analogy of a watchmaker: “The marks of design are too strong to be got over. Design must have had a designer. That designer must have been a person. That person is GOD.”⁴⁸¹ Some decades later, theologian Henry Ward Beecher observed that the “doctrine of Evolution [...] seems to destroy the theory of

⁴⁷⁴ Though my focus will clearly be on the discursive strategies and not on whose arguments are better and more valid, I have to take up the cudgels for the side of the evolutionary theorists at this point. As CDA scholars have pointed out, science is always subjective to a certain degree, because the scientist/scholar always carries cultural baggage and cannot fully escape his own bias. Van Dijk pleads that the CDA scholar should always show solidarity with the oppressed while opposing those who abuse text and talk. In the contest between ID and evolution, it is however quite complicated to identify a clear cut underdog. Thus, my own disaffirmation of Intelligent Design will certainly lead to me questioning and examining the argumentative and discursive strategies of the IDM in a more critical way, although an evaluation of whether they are right and generally who has the better arguments will not be a main focus of as I refrain from emphatically supporting one of the sides in this paper. Nevertheless, even if my opinion is biased, because I personally clearly reject the idea of ID as science, I believe, in accordance with scholars of CDA, that subjective science can make valuable contributions as long as it at least tries to be objective. Cf. van Dijk, “Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis,” 96. Cf. also Wetherell, “Debates in Discourse Research,” 393f.

⁴⁷⁵ Press.

⁴⁷⁶ Phillip E. Johnson, “Starting a Conversation about Evolution,” <http://www.arn.org/docs/johnson/ratzsch.htm>.

⁴⁷⁷ “Mark Twain Quotes,” http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/m/mark_twain.html.

⁴⁷⁸ “ID timeline,” *Science and Theology News*, 10 Oct. 2005, http://www.stnews.org/articles.php?category=guide&guide=Intelligent%20Design&article_id=2277. Cf. also Jonathan Witt, “The Origin of Intelligent Design: A brief history of the scientific theory of intelligent design,” 30 Oct. 2005, <http://www.discovery.org/scripts/viewDB/filesDB-download.php?command=download&id=526>.

⁴⁷⁹ Quoted in: Shermer, 4.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ Quoted in: Shermer, 5.

intelligent design in creation.”⁴⁸² The modern and organized Intelligent Design movement started to take shape in the late 1980s and early 1990s, influenced by publications such as *The Mystery of Life’s Origin* (1984) by Charles Thaxton, who is credited with coining the modern use of Intelligent Design, or the textbook *Of Pandas and People: The Central Question of Biological Origins* (1989).⁴⁸³ In 1991, Philip E. Johnson, a Berkeley law professor and born-again Christian, published the handbook of the ID movement, *Darwin on Trial*.⁴⁸⁴ Five years later, Johnson also became the founding advisor of the Center for Science and Culture of the Discovery Institute, a conservative Christian think tank. Located in Seattle, the institute has gathered almost all the leading figures – William Dembski, Michael Behe, Stephen Meyer, Jonathan Wells – of the ID movement under one roof – and in this process almost single-handedly manufactured the controversy which reached its preliminary climax with the Dover case.⁴⁸⁵ Before Dover, Intelligent Design was generally below the radar of the broader public and only made headlines in small and sometimes rather obscure Christian magazines. Yet, the scientific community fiercely criticized and refuted ID from the beginning, for example in Robert T. Pennock’s *The Tower of Babel: The Evidence against the New Creationism* (1999).

Behe’s *Darwin’s Black Box* (1996) and Wells’ *Icons of Evolution* (2000) advanced and outlined the argumentative strategy of the ID movement as well as the idea behind ID. The key elements of ID, as defined by Philip Johnson, are that “there is a (1) personal creator who (2) is supernatural, and who (3) initiated and (4) continues to control the process of creation (5) in furtherance of some end or purpose.”⁴⁸⁶ Unlike Young Earth Creationism, Intelligent Design does not question the age of the earth and does not deny the process of evolution. However, the ID movement contends that Neo-Darwinism and its reliance on natural selection as the explanation of evolution is inherently wrong and thus heavily relies on pointing out gaps and unanswered questions with regard to evolutionary theory. Rather, they claim to have created a scientific theory based on hypotheses such as Behe’s concept of irreducible complexity and thus attempt to prove empirically and scientifically that a higher intelligence has not only created life but also actively guides the process of evolution.⁴⁸⁷ Though this designer is a supernatural entity, the ID movement – though only officially – states that it is agnostic with regard to the source of design and emphatically declares that they do not invoke

⁴⁸² Henry Ward Beecher, “Evolution and Religion,” (1886), *Critical Issues in American Religious History: A Reader*, ed. Robert R. Mathisen (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2001) 315.

⁴⁸³ Witt.

⁴⁸⁴ “ID timeline,” *Science and Theology News*.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid. For a list of the main player of the ID movement, cf. “Intelligent Design proponents and opponents,” *Science and Theology News*, 10 Oct. 2005, <http://www.stnews.org/Guide-2171.htm>. Behe, Dembski, Meyer, and Wells are all senior fellows at the Discovery Institute. Like Johnson, all of them are also evangelical respectively conservative Christians. Cf. Gary Wills, “A Country Ruled by Faith,” *The New York Review of Books*, Volume 53, Number 16, 2006.

⁴⁸⁶ Pennock, 28.

⁴⁸⁷ Cf. “Questions About Intelligent Design,” Discovery Institute, Center for Science & Culture, <http://www.discovery.org/csc/topQuestions.php>. Behe’s irreducible complexity simply states that some features of biological life, such as the eye, are far too complex to have been created by chance and through natural selection. Hence, he concludes that this proves that an intelligent designer must have created these complex systems, much like the watchmaker implied in Paley’s work.

the Christian God or the Genesis account of the Bible with their theory.⁴⁸⁸ Yet, comparing ID with Paley's watchmaker-metaphor, the only difference is that Paley explicitly and constantly names the designer. Furthermore, as Pennock has pointed out and as exemplified by their research papers, the proponents of ID lack a coherent theory and just share a common minimal set of principles, which Elliott Sober simply calls the "mini-ID theory,"⁴⁸⁹ as it is for example widely debated within the movement if macro-evolution and common descent are compatible with their concept while constantly referring to the Christian God in their papers.⁴⁹⁰

As evident in the discourse surrounding the Dover case, the ID movement uses a multi-pronged attack on the theory of evolution, or, in their words, Neo-Darwinism. However, ID proponents mainly do not fight their battle with scientific arguments as the minority of articles and essays put an emphasis on scientific specifics and as most deal solely with the implications of evolutionary theory. Pennock's *Intelligent Design Creationism and its Critics* was an attempt to juxtapose the ID movement and their concepts with criticisms from the scientific community. The battle with scientific arguments seemed to be a neglectable accessory of the compilation, though, which mainly dealt with philosophical and cultural respectively religious perspectives, featuring subchapters like "Evolution as Dogma" by Johnson or "When Faith and Reason Clash" by Alvin Plantinga. Consequently, it was commonly reviewed as a great overview of the political and social strategies of the ID movement and a clash between science and religion.⁴⁹¹ The discursive strategy of the Intelligent Design movement and more specifically the Discovery Institute can be examined for example by using the vast article database of the official website (www.discovery.org) of the institute as well as the site www.evolutionnews.org, which the Discovery Institute maintains with the purpose to counter, as they put it, the misrepresentation of the evolution issue by the mass media, evolutionists, and other groups. At first glance, it is obvious most of the essays and collected articles are dedicated to offensively attacking evolution, which their lingo relegates to Neo-Darwinism, as well as defending and legitimizing ID as a reaction to the coverage of the mass media and science publications. Another good first point of contact on which I will mostly rely is *Darwin's Nemesis*, a paean of praise for Philip Johnson, "the master," "the ID movement's chief architect and guiding light," the "strategist, teacher,

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Elliott Sober, "Intelligent Design Theory and the Supernatural – The "God or Extra Terrestrials" Reply," http://www.botany.wisc.edu/courses/botany_940/papers/SoberIDSupernat.pdf.

⁴⁹⁰ Cf. Pennock, 28f. Though the official description and explanation of ID on the website of the Discovery Institute (<http://www.discovery.org/csc/topQuestions.php>) states that there is no dispute about common ancestry, the main figures within the ID movement, who almost all happen to be fellows of the Discovery Institute, constantly question and attack the concept of common ancestry. For an example, cf. Jonathan Wells, "Common Ancestry on Trial," *Darwin's Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

⁴⁹¹ Cf. "Reviews of Intelligent Design Creationism and its Critics by Robert T. Pennock," <http://www.msu.edu/~pennock5/research/IDC&CReviews.htm>. There have of course been other instances where proponents and opponents ID have made their case using scientific arguments. The April 2002 issue of *Natural History Magazine* for example gave room to both sides, featuring essays by Behe, Dembski, and Wells from the Discovery Institute and responses by Kenneth Miller, Pennock, Barbara Forrest, and Eugenie Scott, who are some of the main opponents of ID. Yet, though the pieces start with scientific pleadings, they usually drift into metaphysical and philosophical discussions and reasonings. For the online version of the complete report, cf. <http://www.actionbioscience.org/evolution/nhmag.html>.

prophet,” the “Wizard of Berkeley,”⁴⁹² which was published after the Dover case in 2006 and features essays by all prominent players of the ID movement and thus gives a great opportunity to decipher the strategies of the movement. A first scan of the material seems to show that ID proponents to devote most of their time to a struggle for the power of defining science, about which theory is more valid and consequently about which worldview counts – theirs or a purely naturalistic –, and thus seem to concentrate on ‘othering’ the opponent, the Darwinists, and mark them as militant, as extremist, ignorant, irrational, intolerant. The ID movement seems to recycle the age-old paradigm of a war between science and religion over evolution, though they try to reverse the roles and picture themselves as the adherents of scientific inquiry who battle quasi-religious and ideological Darwinists “for the soul of the twenty-first century.”⁴⁹³ As David Keller put it in *Darwin’s Nemesis*: “...our task is to change worldviews.”⁴⁹⁴ Furthermore, embedding the controversy over ID and evolution into the bigger picture, leading ID proponent William Dembski asserts that the battle will continue even after the Dover decision – because “the culture war demands it!”⁴⁹⁵ Having identified that a creation narrative – naturalistic macroevolution – was culturally central to the Western worldview and its secularized subcultures, they set out to shatter this narrative and replace it with their own.⁴⁹⁶ Hence, the IDM consciously integrates their battle into the broader frame of the culture wars with all its implications.

In *Darwin’s Nemesis*, Thomas Woodward, himself a proponent of ID, recapitulates the strategy of the IDM as put forward first in Johnson’s *Darwin On Trial*:

1. Biological and paleontological evidences and other scientific data, with very few exceptions, tend to falsify the Darwinian story of macroevolution and its chemical origin-of-life prelude.
2. Darwinian macroevolution, as a comprehensive truth claim, is ultimately grounded on the philosophical assumption of naturalism.
3. When Darwinism is brought into question, it is routinely protected by empty labels, semantic manipulations and faulty logic.
4. Therefore, Darwinism functions as the central cosmological myth of modern culture – as the centerpiece of a quasi-religious system that is known to be true a priori rather than as a scientific hypothesis that must submit to rigorous testing.⁴⁹⁷

Though the Intelligent Design movement lacks any coherent and developed scientific theory, they exhibit a sophisticated common rhetoric. The four theses mentioned above form one centerpiece of the strategy to challenge the dominance of naturalistic evolution. This first discourse strand hurled at the opponent is based on a purely negative critique of what Woodward and Johnson call the “Darwinian story of macroevolution.” The repeated use of “Darwinian” and “Darwinism” in this short

⁴⁹² Dembski, William, “Preface,” *Darwin’s Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 11-12.

⁴⁹³ John Mark Reynolds, “A Mythic Life,” *Darwin’s Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 30.

⁴⁹⁴ David Keller, “The Wedge if Truth Visits the Laboratory,” *Darwin’s Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 162.

⁴⁹⁵ William A. Dembski, “Preface,” 20.

⁴⁹⁶ Cf. Thomas Woodward, “Putting Darwin on Trial: Phillip Johnson Transforms the Evolutionary Narrative,” *Darwin’s Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 69.

⁴⁹⁷ Woodward, 68.

fragment alone, along with the use of “Neo-Darwinism” in other instances, already indicates the ongoing referential strategy of Johnson and the IDM. First of all, the opponents of the IDM are clearly identified and named, the out-group therefore is defined and labeled to make it visible, while the IDM in turn asserts its own identity, strengthens its in-group cohesion, and creates a simple “us versus them” dichotomy without any fluid space in-between. Throughout the IDM literature and the various discourse fragments, the labels “Darwinists” or “Neo-Darwinists” are produced and reproduced over and over again and they are consistently used to identify ‘the other’. “Darwinism” and “ID”, and the actors associated with the former and the latter, then function as a binary opposition in the IDM universe. Yet, the repeated use of the specific label “Darwinist” in all its variety also serves another purpose: to portray the opponent, ‘the others’, as adherents of a specific ideology and belief system, namely Darwinism. This impression is enhanced by the choice of words which accompany “Darwinism” in this short paragraph: “Darwinian story,” “philosophical assumption,” “cosmological myth of modern culture,” “centerpiece of a quasi-religious system.” Thus, the IDM also aims at categorizing their chosen ‘other’ on their own terms, vying for supremacy in the battle for power of definition with regard to both the ‘self’ and the ‘other’. Biologists and other scientists who do not question macro-evolution and common ancestry and indeed regard these features as the key elements of the theory of evolution, on the other hand, do not generally self-identify as “Darwinists” and rarely use “Darwinism” as a contemporary synonym for the theory of evolution, whose scientific underpinning has evolved considerably since the days of Darwin, although his conceptions still form the basis. With an eye on the rhetoric of the IDM, Paul R. Gross states that many biologists would indeed actively resist the labels “Darwinist” and the term “Darwinism” to describe evolution, because this usage is aimed at politicizing the debate as well as science education and implies that Darwinism, as a substitute for evolution, was a quasi-religious belief system.⁴⁹⁸ Consequently, a search of the memorandum of *Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District* reveals that the usage of the described labels, apart from the description of the historical component of the case, remains limited to citations from publications of the IDM and the quoted comments of the defense expert witnesses, most notably by Michael Behe of the Discovery Institute, who repeatedly invokes the ‘Darwinian other’ to Intelligent Design.⁴⁹⁹ In the statements and discourse fragments of the members of the IDM, “Darwinist” has become a label of primary potency, a buzzword that activates certain frames, certain negative attributions not only in the minds of the proponents of Intelligent Design, but also within their explicitly mentioned primary target group and key constituency: evangelical Christians.⁵⁰⁰

In another, more historic dimension, the IDM follows a strategy of perspectivation and thus aims at

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. Paul R. Gross, “Politicizing Science Education: Resisting “Darwinism” and Keeping the Votes,” *The Thomas B. Fordham Institute*, 1 April 2000, 1f. There are of course biologists who do use the term ‘Darwinian evolution’, yet the far more often used term that includes a direct reference to Darwin is ‘Neo-Darwinism. Cf. Jerry A. Coyne, “Intelligent Design: The Faith That Dare Not Speak Its Name,” *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. John Brockman (New York: Vintage Books, 2006) 6f.

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. Judge John E. Jones III, Case No. 04cv2688, *Tammy Kitzmiller et al. v. Dover Area School District*, Memorandum Opinion, 12/20/2005.

⁵⁰⁰ Cf. Keller, 162.

framing the discourse in a broader context. Ever since Charles Hodge in 1874 asked “What is Darwinism?”⁵⁰¹ and answered his rhetoric question with “It is atheism,” the label has been used constantly by critics of evolution, whether it was William Jennings Bryan at the Scopes trial or Young Earth Creationist Gary North attacking “God-hating Darwinian scientists,”⁵⁰² and thus has become part of a historical, though mainly in-group master frame. Yet, the continuing evocation implies that the theory of evolution itself has not evolved, that there have not been any new scientific advances. From the perspective of the IDM, this recourse to the historical context of course makes sense as they can portray their opponents as static and stable adherents of a naturalist philosophy that was conceptualized by Darwin.

However, the strategy of the IDM aims not only to capture the modes of representation with regard “to mark, assign and classify”⁵⁰³ the ‘other’, but also involves attempts to redefine key concepts such as science, scientific theory, and evolution. As shown earlier, the IDM regards the contest over ID and evolution as a struggle for power. And according to CDA as well as other theories in the social sciences, power is largely associated with knowledge. Returning to the subchapter on power and knowledge, in Western societies, scientific knowledge is the dominant form of knowledge, based on the “hard” knowledge of the natural sciences, which trumps the non-objective “soft” knowledge of the humanities.⁵⁰⁴ Hence, the IDM sets out to challenge the authority of the theory of evolution, which has the status of a “regime of truth” within the science community and other societal groups, by labeling “Darwinism,” the IDM-proxy for the theory of evolution, a mere form of belief, or more specifically using Johnson’s and Woodward’s descriptions, the “cosmological myth of modern culture” and the “centerpiece of a quasi-religious system.”⁵⁰⁵ Further accompanying Darwinism/evolution are the negative signifiers “empty labels,” “semantic manipulations” and “faulty logic.”⁵⁰⁶ The short discourse fragment also emphasizes that “Darwinian macroevolution” was not: supported by “paleontological evidences and other scientific data,” which on the contrary would even falsify it, and “a scientific hypothesis that must submit to rigorous testing.”⁵⁰⁷ This attack on the scientific validity also echoes the criticism of earlier days, for example the assertion made by Bryan at the Scopes trial that the theory of Darwinian evolution was just “guesses strung together.”⁵⁰⁸

The assertions of this short discourse fragment and the line of argumentation reverberate throughout the larger discourse strands about the relationship between self/IDM and other/Darwinism. The ‘Darwinian other’ is constantly referred to with negative attributions and its scientific validity is continuously attacked: Dembski decries “the downright shamelessness”⁵⁰⁹ of the

⁵⁰¹ Cf. Hodge, 312.

⁵⁰² Quoted in: Moore, 63.

⁵⁰³ Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other’,” 338.

⁵⁰⁴ Cf. pages 22-23 of this paper.

⁵⁰⁵ Woodward, 68.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁸ Quoted in: Larson, 42.

⁵⁰⁹ Dembski, “Preface,” 16,

opposition, Stephen C. Meyer the “Darwinian polemic”⁵¹⁰ while mocking the “panoply of euphemism and wishful thinking”⁵¹¹ of Darwinist argumentation. Keller declares that “[f]ew scientists are dogmatic Darwinists; most are closer to kids taught their worldview in Darwinian Sunday school,”⁵¹² yet only a few lines later asserts that they were indeed “true believers of the church of Darwin,”⁵¹³ while Behe, whose account reads like a classical Christian conversion story with Phillip Johnson in the role of the prophet, once again shakes his head in disgust at the belief system of Darwinism, of which he also was a victim, which was being hammered into the minds of the young in public schools.⁵¹⁴ In just one essay, “Dealing with the Backlash Against Intelligent Design,” Dembski again, in a seeming attempt to claim the moniker “Johnson’s Bulldog,” denounces the “corrupt ideology that was being enforced by a dogmatic and authoritarian scientific elite”⁵¹⁵ which was “increasingly hostile,”⁵¹⁶ “vicious,”⁵¹⁷ even “stodgy and humorless,”⁵¹⁸ and engaged in “character assassination, ad hominem attacks, guilt by association and demonization,”⁵¹⁹ which were “misleading our young people” because of their “ideological agenda”⁵²⁰ which was “destructive to rational discourse.”⁵²¹ Yet, in a classical case of projection, Dembski warns his fellow ID proponents not to follow the example of the “Dogmatic Darwinian Fundamentalists”⁵²² and use “pejorative labels that are rich in negative associations,”⁵²³ but instead advocates “steering the discussion to matters of substance and away from labels.”⁵²⁴ While all these examples are taken from *Darwin’s Nemesis*, a scan of other publications and discourse fragments of the IDM will only enhance the impression of a common rhetoric exhibiting a consistent pattern of discursive strategies employing stereotypical lexical labels, especially considering that almost all leading proponents of ID are featured in that extensive compilation.

Since the rhetoric of the IDM is characterized by a system of binary oppositions, the discrediting of Darwinism/evolution thus also implies that ID is the exact opposite: a scientific theory that is based on empirical evidence and not on dogmatic belief. In the afterword to *Darwin’s Nemesis*, Johnson emphatically reflects this point in his portrayal of the fellows of the Discovery Institute and other proponents of ID:

⁵¹⁰ Stephen C. Meyer, “Your Witness, Mr. Johnson,” *Darwin’s Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 34.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁵¹² Keller, 161.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁴ Cf. Michael J. Behe, “From Muttering to Mayhem: How Phillip Johnson Got Me Moving,” *Darwin’s Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 42.

⁵¹⁵ William A. Dembski, “Dealing with the Backlash against Intelligent Design,” *Darwin’s Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 82.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*

⁵²² This is the main part of his suggested title for a book about ‘Darwinism’. Cf. *ibid.*, 98.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, 99.

ponents of ID:

They all share an interest in freeing science from the thought control of a materialist ideology that forbids scientists to follow the evidence if there is a danger that the evidence will lead to knowledge of something that the ideologies don't want the world to know.⁵²⁵

Summing it up: In Johnson's mind, the proponents of ID are not only scientists, but the defenders of true science, while the implied 'other' is a group of ideological conspirators. The proponents of ID refer to themselves, using a paraphrase, as being 'the defenders of reason'⁵²⁶ who engage in "high-level, reasoned, academic discussion,"⁵²⁷ as unbiased "radical skeptics"⁵²⁸ who are "rational and truth preserving"⁵²⁹ and who are advancing real science based on empirical evidence.⁵³⁰ Once again, Johnson leads the way in describing the superior approach of Intelligent Design: "My purpose is to examine the scientific evidence on its own terms, being careful to distinguish the evidence itself from any religious or philosophical bias that might distort our interpretation of that evidence."⁵³¹ In the binary machine inherent to the thought of the IDM, the 'Darwinian other' naturally lacks all of these features. Using and dismissing academic credentials is another way of creating a stark dichotomy between the 'scientific self' and the 'unscientific other'. Hence, the renowned National Center for Science Education (NCSE) is an "obscure organization,"⁵³² its executive director Scott "an unknown science educator,"⁵³³ while the Discovery Institute regularly publishes and updates "A Scientific Dissent From Darwinism," where it lists anyone with at least a PH.D. in the natural sciences, no matter whether it is biochemistry, engineering, or kinesiology, who supports ID in an attempt to underscore its scientific credibility.⁵³⁴

Thus, to some extent, the IDM also reinforces the role of scientific knowledge by portraying ID as the truly scientific alternative to the "science stopper":⁵³⁵ dogmatic Darwinian macroevolution. The exponential status of science as the main form of objective knowledge in Western societies thus has forced the IDM to base their conceptualization of Intelligent Design on the language of science and scientific arguments in order to even be considered as a serious and valid alternative to evolution and to have even the slightest chance of being included in the curriculum of public schools. How-

⁵²⁵ Phillip E. Johnson, "The Final Word," *Darwin's Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 317.

⁵²⁶ Cf. Nancy Pearcey, "Intelligent Design and the Defense of Reason," *Darwin's Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 227.

⁵²⁷ Dembski, "Preface," 14.

⁵²⁸ Ibid., 17.

⁵²⁹ Jay Wesley Richards, "How Phil Johnson Changed My Mind," *Darwin's Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 58.

⁵³⁰ Cf. Dembski, "Dealing with the Backlash Against Intelligent Design," 95f., 103f. Cf. also Behe, 39f.; Wells, 172f.

⁵³¹ Quoted in: Woodward, 66.

⁵³² Behe, 44.

⁵³³ Ibid.

⁵³⁴ "A Scientific Dissent From Darwinism," *The Discovery Institute*, June 2006,

<http://www.discovery.org/scripts/viewDB/filesDB-download.php?command=download&id=660>.

⁵³⁵ Robert Crowther, "Dogmatic Darwinism is the Science Stopper," *The Discovery Institute* 24 Jan.2007, <http://www.discovery.org/scripts/mt/mt-tb.cgi/1849>.

ever, the portrayal of the own in-group as standard bearers of true science ties in with attempts to challenge the contemporary regime of truth and redefine the corresponding understanding of science. The common and widely accepted definition of science, propagated among others by the National Academy of Sciences – which even proponents of ID during the Dover trial agreed on that it was the most prestigious scientific organization in the United States –, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the vast majority of scientists is based on the two basic tenets that scientific explanations must be natural and that they must be testable and falsifiable.⁵³⁶ Philosophers of science refer to this “ground rule” as “methodological naturalism” and regard it as the common scientific method.⁵³⁷ This definition of science then definitively, instantly, and a priori rules out any claim on part of the IDM that ID was a scientific theory, because it invoked the idea of a supernatural and thus naturally unprovable and untestable designer. In his decision of the Dover case, Judge Jones consequently ruled that Intelligent Design is not science, proving his verdict by citing among other things from an internal document of the Discovery Institute titled “Five Year Strategic Plan Summary,” which stated the goal to replace the current scientific method with a theistic and Christian science and revealed the ideological position of the IDM.⁵³⁸

Therefore, following Dembski’s verdict that methodological naturalism must be overturned for the prospering of ID, the IDM aims to achieve this central matter of concern by flanking it with philosophical argumentations and reasonings.⁵³⁹ In *Darwin’s Nemesis*, both Francis J. Beckwith and Nancy Pearcey bemoan the dominance of scientific materialism respectively methodological naturalism vis à vis other forms of knowledge, namely religious knowledge.⁵⁴⁰ Pearcey criticizes that science was treated as public truth while religion and morality were being removed “from the realm of morality and objectivity” and relegated “to the realm of subjective values.”⁵⁴¹ This criticism of science resonates with postmodern notions that deny the existence of final truths and objective knowledge and thus reject the idea of a neutrality of science altogether.⁵⁴² The IDM and conservative Christians certainly seem to share the conviction that scientists are influenced by their environment, by culture, by their beliefs, that science is thus value-laden and forms its own culture, a culture Habermas called “scientism.”⁵⁴³ However, although Cardinal Schönborn in his defense of ID invoked the idea

⁵³⁶ Cf. *Tammy Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District*, 65f. Cf. also Witham, 85. This definition of course only applies to what is regarded as the ‘hard sciences’, the natural sciences, and hence excludes the social sciences.

⁵³⁷ Cf. *Tammy Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District*, 65.

⁵³⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 68f. This summary is part of a broader collection of internal documents called “The Wedge,” in which the Discovery Institute clarified its strategy in detail and in which the IDM revealed the centrality of their religious motivations and worldview. This document was one of the key evidences in the Dover trial. For more on “The Wedge,” cf. Barbara Forrest and Paul R. Gross, *Creationism’s Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁵³⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵⁴⁰ Cf. Francis J. Beckwith, “It’s the Epistemology, Stupid! Science, Public Schools and What Counts as Knowledge,” *Darwin’s Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 106f.

⁵⁴¹ Pearcey, 233.

⁵⁴² Cf. Bruce, 230. Cf. also Mendelsohn, 26.

⁵⁴³ Cf. Jürgen Habermas, “Religion in the Public Sphere,”

http://www.sandiego.edu/pdf/pdf_library/habermaslecture031105_c939cceb2ab087bdfc6df291ec0fc3fa.p

of a hegemony of “scientism” based on an extreme naturalist position, he, along with Pearcey and others in the IDM, opposes postmodernism’s assertion that there were no final and underlying truths: their form of knowledge was “superior to a “scientific” argument” because it was “based on more certain and enduring truths and principles.”⁵⁴⁴ Additionally, the IDM also attempts to redefine the concept of evolution – trying to make it appear that the common understanding of evolution as shared by all leading biologists which revolves around the concepts of natural selection and common ancestry was just a disputed specific definition⁵⁴⁵ – while repeating over and over again that evolution was just a theory and that any comparison of it to “theories in the serious sciences (...) is grotesque.”⁵⁴⁶

Hence, the IDM generally claims that Darwinism/evolution was just a belief system while they represented a wholly scientific theory, yet they simultaneously assert that even if it was science, it would and could still not be fully objective, all the while asserting the objectivity of ID based on empirical evidence. This intellectual dishonesty is only understandable and can only be explained to a certain degree against the backdrop of their different conception of science and their attempt to break into the discursive formation of science. In their fight to insert ID into the realm of science, to make their voice heard and to gather respect outside subcultural discourse, one gets the impression that the goal justifies the means, even if they are inconsistent and contradictory, as long as these means discredit Darwinism, attack the purely naturalistic basis of science, and therefore advance ID and their worldview in this quest for power. This power is needed in order to overcome the decoupling of science and religion and harmonize or even synthesize the two with the goal to create a new regime of truth that resembles the situation of the pre-Darwinian era, when Paley’s idea of a supernatural designer, which was of course the Christian God, and his metaphor of a watchmaker was the accepted wisdom.⁵⁴⁷

The IDM of course uses additional discursive strategies, which I will just describe in brief at this point. One is that the IDM tries to portray itself as the underdog in the battle with “the secular elites, notably in the academic and scientific establishments,”⁵⁴⁸ claiming that there was a “gentlemen’s agreement” in the science community against ID.⁵⁴⁹ This strategy of victimization also extends to the mass media, which the IDM accuses of framing the debate about ID in a partisan way.⁵⁵⁰ The IDM

df. Cf. also Mendelsohn, 26.

⁵⁴⁴ Christoph Cardinal Schönborn, “The Designs of Science,” *First Things* 159, January 2006, 38. Pearcey even asserts that naturalistic evolution is directly responsible for the postmodern relativism afflicting Western societies in general. Cf. Pearcey, 230f.

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. Woodward 67. Cf. also Jonathan Wells, “Churches shouldn’t buy into Darwinists’ ploy,” *Yale Daily News*, 29 Jan. 2007, <http://www.yaledailynews.com/articles/view/19634>.

⁵⁴⁶ Dembski, “Preface,” 23.

⁵⁴⁷ Cf. Marsden, 135.

⁵⁴⁸ Dembski, “Preface,” 16.

⁵⁴⁹ Cf. Denise O’Leary, “None Dare Call it Reason: A Smithsonian Scientist Discovers the “Gentlemen’s Agreement” Against Intelligent Design,” <http://www.4truth.net/site/apps/nl/content3.asp?c=hiKXLbPNLrF&b=784461&ct=982987>.

⁵⁵⁰ Cf. for example John West, “Inside the Mind of the *New York Times*: My Exchange with Cornelia Dean, Evolution Partisan,” *The Discovery Institute* 5 Nov. 2006, <http://www.disco-very.org/scripts/mt/mt-tb.cgi/1387>.

also tries to create a majority-minority dichotomy by using strategies of inclusion and exclusion. They not only depict the IDM as part of a growing community of scientists which dissents against Darwinism and attracts scores of young, undogmatic scientists and thus gains acceptance in the mainstream,⁵⁵¹ they also consciously disconnect their movement from a purely scientific plane and place it within the people, as part of the public. Dembski and Wells thus emphasize that only a clear minority of Americans shared the beliefs of the Darwinists, who mislead “our young people” and waste “our tax dollars,”⁵⁵² while the vast majority, in tune with the IDM, opposes them – “... we need to hold the evolutionists’ feet to the fire.”⁵⁵³ Additionally, though they claim to be undogmatic and agnostic, not only in internal strategy papers like *The Wedge* document but even rather openly in *Darwin’s Nemesis* does the IDM repeatedly invoke their Christian God and clearly identify the designer. Behe declares that the IDM needs to distinguish “between evolution as an utterly random process [...] and evolution as the intended result of God’s will”⁵⁵⁴ while Dembski thanks “Johnson the prophet” for pointing “us to the true God, the one in whose image we are made and to whom we must ultimately render an account.”⁵⁵⁵ The IDM thus imagines itself as part of the broad group of all Americans taxpayers, and inserts itself into the Christian mainstream while simultaneously excluding the ‘Darwinian other’ from that community.

4.3.1.2. “Creationism in a cheap tuxedo”:⁵⁵⁶ The Response of the Science Community

By virtue of science and psychoanalysis, mankind begins to see the approaches to the Kingdom of Reason. The false knowledge of a supernatural Other, which was an evasion of true self-knowledge, will be sloughed off like an outworn garment, and God, together with bibles, saints, and churches, will be consigned to the museum of human infancy.

—Irving Kristol, *Reflections of a Neoconservative*⁵⁵⁷

The response by the science community and specifically by evolutionary biologists to the challenge posed by Intelligent Design was simple and almost virtually: ID is religion, not science. Additionally, Stephen Jay Gould and others pointed out that debating creationists as well as the Intelligent Design movement is “absurd” and “stupid” because it is “dishonorable in science to think that an issue will be solved by rhetorical skill.”⁵⁵⁸ For evolutionary scientists and the majority of the scientific world, there simply is no scientific controversy over evolution: evolution is seen as a scientific fact and ID as completely unscientific, as a concept motivated by a religious worldview. Hence, they maintain that the debate over ID is a cultural controversy, a religious one, even a philosophical one about truth and knowledge, a debate which in the end is “a struggle for power.”⁵⁵⁹ Shermer epitomized this view:

⁵⁵¹ Cf. Dembski, “Dealing with the Backlash Against Intelligent Design,” 95, 104. Cf. also Meyer, 36.

⁵⁵² Dembski, “Dealing with the Backlash Against Intelligent Design,” 97.

⁵⁵³ Ibid. Cf. also Wells, “Churches shouldn’t buy into Darwinists’ ploy.”

⁵⁵⁴ Behe, 39.

⁵⁵⁵ Dembski, “Preface,” 19.

⁵⁵⁶ Nicholas Matzke from the National Center for Science Education, quoted in: Martha Raffaele, “School board OKs challenges to evolution,” *MNSBC Online*, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6470259/>.

⁵⁵⁷ Kristol, 296.

⁵⁵⁸ Quoted in: Witham, 225.

⁵⁵⁹ Pennock, 41.

The evolution-creationism controversy is a cultural tempest in a scientific teapot – the debate is entirely cultural, even as professional scientists go about their business without giving Intelligent Design a second thought.⁵⁶⁰

Having made the assertion that ID is purely based on religious motivations, Shermer also discusses the three possible relationships between science and religion and thus the ways in which scientists can engage with IDM. The first option is what he calls the “Conflicting-Worlds Model,” which “holds that science and religion are mutually exclusive ways of knowing, one being right and the other wrong.”⁵⁶¹ Therefore, the radicals on both sides – atheists and creationists – embrace this worldview, demanding the subordination of the respective ‘other’. The second possible relationship is the “Same-World Model,” which “holds that science and religion are two ways of examining the same reality,”⁵⁶² much like the situation in the pre-Darwinian era when science was understood as a way of proving and examining the wonders of God’s creation. According to Shermer, this view is purported by both mainstream theologians and believing scientists. Finally, the third option is called the “Separate-Worlds Model,” which holds that science and religion “are neither in conflict nor in agreement”⁵⁶³ because they operate in different spheres. This last view is based on Gould’s concept of “nonoverlapping magisterial” (NOMA), which declares that science “tries to document the factual character of the natural world” while religion deals with the “realm of human purposes, meanings and values.”⁵⁶⁴ Consequently, science and religion cannot be understood as a simple “either/or” dichotomy and the relationship between the two is thus characterized by “respectful noninterference.”⁵⁶⁵ Gould also claims that NOMA represents a widespread consensus shared by the majority of leaders in science and religion, a view which is also shared by Shermer, who concludes that NOMA is the only viable and logical solution.⁵⁶⁶ However, the principle of noninterference is violated by religious fundamentalists, who, consistently pushing different brands of creationism, were “trying to impose their idiosyncratic and decidedly minority views upon the magisterium of the other side.”⁵⁶⁷ Hence his appraisal: “The enemy is not religion but dogmatism and intolerance.”⁵⁶⁸ The assumption that ID respectively creationism is a minority view is certainly true for the science community, but not for the public, where a majority consistently sides with the challengers of the theory of evolution.⁵⁶⁹ The success of the ID movement and their claims to promote a scientific theory coupled with the rather positive reception of the public, which as the polls showed believes that there is a scientific controversy and which favors the teaching of ID, has caused scientists to acknowledge their dilemma vis à vis the public as well as urged them to react vehemently to the challenge posed

⁵⁶⁰ Shermer, xviii.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., 119-120.

⁵⁶² Ibid., 120.

⁵⁶³ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁴ Gould, 4.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid., 64. Cf. also Shermer, 121f.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., 126.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., 149.

⁵⁶⁹ *The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life and The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press*, “Many Americans Uneasy with Mix of Religion and Politics,” 24 Aug. 2006, 15.

by ID. As Eugenie Scott, the executive director of the National Center for Science Education has put it: “The only reason a scientist would have to fight or argue with religion is when either one steps on the other’s turf.”⁵⁷⁰

In the upheaval surrounding ID, many within the science community followed the principle of Gould’s NOMA, consistently stating that science and religion need not necessarily clash and that science does not contradict religion.⁵⁷¹ In an attempt to avoid being labeled as anti-religious or anti-Christian, the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) had for example already adopted a new preamble in the 1990s, which stated that “science and religion occupy two separate realms of human thought. Demanding that they be combined detracts from the glory of each.”⁵⁷² Acknowledging the opinion polls in which a majority continually supports the idea of creationism in favor of evolution, these public relations measures aim at placing the science community solidly within the mainstream while attempting to portray the repeated creationist challenges as outsiders both religiously and scientifically.

Along came Intelligent Design and with it, in the eyes of the science community, another violation of NOMA. Not only was ID deemed a religiously motivated attack on evolution and science in general, but, even worse, was of the dogmatic kind as described by Gould. And this repeated violation prompted a harsh reaction by the science community which was determined, using Scott’s metaphor, to defend its turf. Similar to my analysis of the IDM, I will focus on one book, *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, in my examination of the anti-ID discursive strategies. Edited by John Brockman, the book features a wide array of scientists from the fields of paleontology, evolutionary biology, or evolutionary psychology and is chronologically situated after the Dover case in the year 2006. The tone of the book is already clearly signaled in its title, which firmly embeds it in the broader frame of the warfare between science and ID as a proxy for religious fundamentalism. Furthermore, the wording “Science Versus...” also conveys the sole claim of the contributors of this book to represent science, to depict themselves as members of the science community, while thus clearly excluding the IDM. The title then already unambiguously identifies the ‘other’ and constitutes the ‘self’ in a binary opposition and emphasizes an “us versus them” dichotomy. Furthermore, by subducting and recontextualizing “intelligence” in the title, the authors ascertain that “intelligent thought” is inherently on their side. The different articles inside then contain virtually a mirror image of the discursive strategies of the IDM in *Darwin’s Nemesis*, though of course from a diametrically opposed perspective. The contributors, to which I from now on could

⁵⁷⁰ Quoted in: Witham, 58.

⁵⁷¹ Cf. for example Shermer, 123f. The authors of the book *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, on which I will mainly rely on in the following to decipher the discursive strategies of the science community, generally, with a few exceptions, also maintain that science cannot and should not try to disprove religion or the existence of God as these questions ultimately do not belong in the sphere of science. Cf. for example Leonard Susskind, “The Good Fight,” *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. John Brockman (New York: Vintage Books, 2006) 31f. Cf. also Scott Atran, “Unintelligent Design,” *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. John Brockman (New York: Vintage Books, 2006) 126f.

⁵⁷² Cf. Witham, 111. The NABT also changed the wording of a textbook disclaimer, dropping the words “impersonal” and “unsupervised” from their description of the process of evolution.

refer to as the “Intelligent Thought movement” (ITM) due to matters of convenience and a lack of a more fitting moniker, first of all firmly embed the discourse over evolution into the master-frames of the culture wars, seeing both sides, “representing two extremely different worldviews,”⁵⁷³ as “pawns in a bigger game, a game of politics and power.”⁵⁷⁴ Additionally, they repeatedly entrench the current debate into the age-old image of warfare between science and religion.⁵⁷⁵ Although NOMA explicitly tries to tackle this image, some scientists, being avowed atheists or agnostics, also have a rather strained relationship with the principle of noninterference, yet naturally see the creationist camp as part of religious dogmatism and fundamentalists in the role of the cultural aggressors.

With ID trying to break into the science discourse and the favorable view of it by the larger public in mind, the ITM sets out to discredit any scientific reputation of its ‘other’ and to name ID what they think it is: “a public-relations campaign funded by Christian fundamentalist interests.”⁵⁷⁶ John Brockman⁵⁷⁷ already sets the tone in his introduction to the volume, warning “of the gravest of threats” posed by “our own virulent domestic version”⁵⁷⁸ of religious fundamentalism as embodied by the Intelligent Design movement, which in his view simply continued the legacy of its creationist and religious antecedents.⁵⁷⁹ He also decries the “bizarre claims” and the “beliefs consistent with those of the Middle Ages” and charges that

...the intelligent-design movement has made collective fools of large segments of the American public. Educated Americans are dumbstruck by the attempt of the state of Kansas to officially redefine science to include the supernatural. Europeans cannot believe that such an argument should be raging in the in the twenty-first century – and in the United States, of all places, the seat of our most advanced technology and a leader in so many areas of scientific research.⁵⁸⁰

Brockman finishes his introduction with a vivid description and comparison: “The Visigoths are at the gates. Will we let them in?”⁵⁸¹ These short discourse fragments already highlight the various discourse strands and discursive strategies purported and pursued by Brockman and the other contributors of *Intelligent Thought*. Brockman here reflects the rhetoric of the IDM and follows a strict referential strategy of positive self-representation and negative other presentation. Thus, in direct competition with the IDM, which attempts to characterize itself as the rational and truly scientific group representing common sense mainstream, Brockman and the broader science community aim at capturing or rather maintaining the modes of representation. With ID trying to break into the

⁵⁷³ Susskind, 24.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., 25.

⁵⁷⁵ Cf. Lisa Randall, “Designing Words,” *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. John Brockman (New York: Vintage Books, 2006) 198f. Cf. also Susskind 24.

⁵⁷⁶ John Brockman, “Introduction,” *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. John Brockman (New York: Vintage Books, 2006) x.

⁵⁷⁷ Brockman is also the founder of the nonprofit Edge Foundation, which provides the institutional framework for the so-called “Third Culture,” a group of scientists who aspire to discuss topics such as morality, religion, etc., “the deeper meanings of our lives”, from a purely scientific point of view, which here once again confined to the ‘hard’ sciences. Cf. http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/.

⁵⁷⁸ Brockman, ix.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., xii. Brockman here cites approvingly from the decision by Judge Jones in the Dover case.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid., x. In this discourse fragment, Brockman refers to the backing of ID by the Kansas Board of Education in September 2005 and thus another sequel to the Dover case.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid., xiii.

sphere of science, Brockman makes sure to relegate ID back to the realm of religion, even going so far as to categorize it as the domestic version of religious fundamentalism. The reference words “virulent” and “bizarre” further discredit what is perceived and defined as the unscientific, the fundamentalist ‘other’ to science, whose proponents then are adherents of a rather militant belief system.

By portraying ID as the newest incarnation of a long line of creationist challenges to evolution, Brockman also employs a strategy of perspectivization by putting the contemporary debate into a particular historical context that has determined the public perception at least since the Scopes trial of 1925. He unequivocally alludes to the stereotypes purported by the reporting of H.L. Mencken from Dayton, Tennessee, by using phrases such as “Middle Ages,” “collective fools,” and “the Visigoths” to refer to the IDM and those parts of the public who support it. Furthermore, by stating that “educated Americans” were “dumbstruck” by the attempts to insert ID into the classroom, Brockman purports another long-standing stereotype: that of the uneducated creationists from the hinterlands. Throughout the whole discourse fragment, the other is negatively connotated through the use of lexical choice. Yet, stereotypes do not only ridicule and devalue the other, they are also used as mechanisms for social control by demarcating the self from the other and thus exclude the IDM and specific segments of the public from an imagined community of rational scientists, educated Americans and also Europeans whom he describes as wrinkling their noses at the state of things in America. Though Brockman throughout the text constructs two distinct groups by reference and predication, he does not invoke a clear majority/minority dichotomy, at least with regard to the American public. Though he clearly positions ID outside the scientific mainstream and the science community, he refrains, probably acknowledging the opinion polls, from labeling the IDM as cultural outsiders and scientists respectively evolutionists as the cultural insiders. His approach seems to reflect the state of mind of somebody who is yelling “Honey! What will the neighbors think?” readily being apt to quickly and resolutely disassociate himself from the “collective fools” who could embarrass him in front of his European “neighbors” to which he, in his portrayal along with the “educated Americans,” feels more attached. This directly ties in with his rather ambivalent and patronizing and condescending relationship with specific segments of the American public. Brockman seems to distrust the judgment of the masses, which in his view have fallen for the rhetorical tricks of the IDM, and repeatedly stresses that “scientists should seize every opportunity to educate the general public.”⁵⁸² However, by stressing that science “is the big news” as well as “public culture,”⁵⁸³ Brockman tries to solidify the status of science as the foundation of society, at the expense of religion, which is a competing carrier of public culture. This theme stretches throughout *Intelligent Thought*, as the contributing scientists mostly generally refuse to debate the scientific validity of the concepts and ideas behind ID and instead focus on explaining and defending evolution, often stopping just short of an extreme glorification of Neo-Darwinism: “What a remarkably elegant theory it is, what a vast body it

⁵⁸² Ibid., xii.

⁵⁸³ Ibid., ix.

explains.”⁵⁸⁴

As laid out earlier, the discourse about ‘self’ and ‘other’ mostly occurs within a system of reductionist binary oppositions which create another simplistic “us versus them” dichotomy. Thus, although Brockman focuses on attacking and emphasizing the negative attributions of ID, he implicitly conveys the positive characteristics of science without explicitly mentioning them. This dichotomous “us versus them” portrayal of the actors thus creates a two-part world, a divided society, in-groups and out-groups through demarcations that run along the lines of irrational/rational, Middle Ages/modernity, uneducated/educated, fundamentalist religion/public culture. This dichotomy is further amplified by the alarmist language that culminates in Brockman’s “Visigoths”-metaphor. His invocation of “the collapse of great civilizations”⁵⁸⁵ sounds, if not hysterical, than at least very exaggerated. Yet, to the science community, their worldview is under attack by ID, an attack which in the eyes of the science community is only amplified and thus all the more dangerous because of the formidable support of a conservative Christian subculture and even more mainstream segments of the public. The role of science as the dominant source of knowledge, the purity of science, the definition of science, the secularity of science education and the United States in general – all this is at stake in the mind of Brockman and certainly needs protection, which ultimately is achieved rhetorically and discursively through the demonization of the other, the ridiculing of the other, the portraying of the other as militant.

Although Brockman’s language is vigorous and fierce, this is certainly not an isolated case within the science community. His rhetoric and his discursive strategies reverberate in the essays of his fellow contributors to *Intelligent Thought*. Coyne asserts that “ID is simply biblical creationism” and accuses the IDM of playing tricks and dishonesty because they were “disguising ID as secular science while admitting its obvious religious motivation only to evangelical Christians on whose support they rely.”⁵⁸⁶ His conclusion: “In the end, the theory of intelligent design, when it has any content at all, proves to be nothing more than a mishmash of Christian dogma and discredited science.”⁵⁸⁷ Evolution respectively Neo-Darwinism on the other hand was “a scientific fact,” “a body of evidence about the real world”⁵⁸⁸ which “is not doubted by any serious scientists.”⁵⁸⁹ In the system of binary oppositions, the implied corresponding attributions to ID would then be “belief system,” “unreal world or rather fantasy,” and “frivolous scientists.” He also excludes the IDM from the science community by stating that the “they” have only produced one peer-reviewed paper to convince “us,” which even has been refuted.⁵⁹⁰ Next, Susskind also depicts the IDM as “benighted zealots who would prefer that intellectual history had ended in the fifteenth century,”⁵⁹¹ “as masters of manipula-

⁵⁸⁴ Coyne, 11.

⁵⁸⁵ Brockman, xiii.

⁵⁸⁶ Coyne, 4.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., 21.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., 20.

⁵⁹⁰ Cf. ibid., 22.

⁵⁹¹ Susskind, 32.

tion,”⁵⁹² as “silly,” “absurd” and “laughable,” as “provocateurs” fueled by “antiscientific passion.”⁵⁹³ The reaction on part of the IDM and right-wing culture warriors in general is, in his view,

a result of the anger, fear, frustration, and humiliation suffered over the years by the losers in the culture wars: those who would have kept women in the kitchen, blacks in the back of the bus, and gays in the closet.⁵⁹⁴

The conveyed image is crystal-clear: on the one side the progressive forces and their accomplishments, which face a backwards, racist, zealot, fundamentalist, intolerant, conservative ‘other’ which remains relatively broad and blurry in his account. Susskind also pledges that the “legitimate science community”⁵⁹⁵ needs “to defend the integrity and objectivity of science,”⁵⁹⁶ yet without overreacting to the attacks of ID in order to “regain the goodwill”⁵⁹⁷ of the majority, “those sensible people who have been jerked around by conflicting ideologies and don’t know what to think.”⁵⁹⁸ Daniel C. Dennett takes the same line, calling ID a “hoax,”⁵⁹⁹ labeling the IDM as “ideologues,”⁶⁰⁰ and mocking ID by comparing it to the “aquatic-ape hypothesis”⁶⁰¹ while repeatedly stressing that, since ID has no content, there is no controversy.⁶⁰²

The book itself is firmly embedded in and representative of the discursive strategies of the science community.⁶⁰³ Writing in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, several scientists and lawmakers contended that a majority of Americans lived in a parallel universe ruled by “pseudo-science” and warned once again of the threat of ID.⁶⁰⁴ The same article also features a cartoon subtitled “The War on Rationality,” which mocks and ridicules “the really, really stupid” idea that is Intelligent Design.⁶⁰⁵ Along the same lines, the renowned magazine *Scientific American* ran a mocking editorial in which they apologize for the one-sidedness of “this magazine’s coverage of so-called evolution”.⁶⁰⁶

⁵⁹² Ibid.

⁵⁹³ All of the preceding attributions and reference words can be found on Susskind, 25.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid., 26.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., 29.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid., 32.

⁵⁹⁹ Daniel D. Dennett, “The Hoax of Intelligent Design and How It Was Perpetrated,” *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. John Brockman (New York: Vintage Books, 2006) 33.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., 44.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 47.

⁶⁰² Cf. Ibid., 49.

⁶⁰³ Just a few examples: Lawrence M. Krauss, “Words, Science, and the State of Evolution,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 11/29/2002, Vol. 49, Issue 14. Krauss is a professor of physics and astronomy; Eugenie C. Scott and Glenn Branch, “‘Intelligent Design’ Not Accepted by Most Scientists,” National Center for Science Education, http://www.ncseweb.org/resources/articles/996_intelligent_design_not_accep_9_10_2002.asp; Barbara Forrest, “The ‘Vise Strategy’ Undone: Kitzmiller et al. v. Dover Area School District,” *Creation & Intelligent Design Watch*, <http://www.csicop.org/in-telligentdesignwatch/kitzmiller.html>. A quick Google search will turn up myriad of other sources in which scientists defend evolution and attack ID. Furthermore, the written transcript of the Dover trial features additional testimonies by scientists.

⁶⁰⁴ Cf. Allan D. Attie, Elliot Sober, Ronald L. Numbers, Richard M. Amasino, Beth Cox, Terese Berceau, Thomas Powell, and Michael M. Cox, “Defending science education against intelligent design: a call to action,” *The Journal of Clinical Investigation*, Volume 116, Number 5, May 2006, 1134.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid., 1135.

⁶⁰⁶ The Editors of the *Scientific American*, “Okay, We Give Up. We fell so ashamed,” 1 April 2005, <http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?chanID=sa004&articleID=000E555C-4387-1237-81CB83414B7FFE9F>.

...we shamefully mistreated the Intelligent Design (ID) theorists by lumping them in with creationists. Creationists believe that God designed all life, and that's a somewhat religious idea. But ID theorists think that at unspecified times some unnamed superpowerful entity designed life, or maybe just some species, or maybe just some of the stuff in cells. That's what makes ID a superior scientific theory: *it doesn't get bogged down in details* [italics original].⁶⁰⁷

The editors think out aloud to rename the magazine "Unscientific Unamerican" and continue their scathing sarcasm by pledging not just to present "the science that scientists say is science. And it will start on April Fool's day."⁶⁰⁸

To sum it up real quick at this point, the discursive strategies of the science community mirror those of the IDM: they try to win the battle of definition by constantly referring to the IDM as creationists – Pennock even has deemed them "intelligent design creationists"⁶⁰⁹ – and therefore evoke certain historical frames and particular contexts, they use stereotypical and evaluative attributions of negative traits, they defend evolution and are insistent that Neo-Darwinism is not just another belief system and that science can indeed be objective and is not constructed,⁶¹⁰ they portray themselves as the moderate and tolerant group that is able to reconcile faith and science, and so on. Furthermore, there is a general feeling of mistrust coupled with an often rather condescending view towards the public on part of the science community. With ID finding broad acceptance, the science community faces the dilemma of how to deal with the public. While some like Brockman and Susskind favor to be as outspoken as possible to educate Americans, others fear that public debates would only play out to the disadvantage of science and evolution, since the debates were created and staged by the IDM in order to get news coverage and in order to mobilize and draw sympathetic segments of the public, and since there is really nothing to talk about.⁶¹¹ Additionally, as biologist Joseph D. McNerney has emphasized, "[s]cience is not a democratic domain, and its principles are not subject to vote."⁶¹²

Although most within the science community focus on attacking the IDM and religious fundamentalism, there are also factions within the science community which do not want to limit themselves to defending their own turf, but instead aim at stepping on religion's turf in a violation of NOMA. A poll by Graffin and Provine not only found that the overwhelming majority of the surveyed leading biologist's professed to be atheists, but that the vast majority also opposed the NOMA principle.⁶¹³ This more extreme brand of scientists then often not only attack the perceived religious fundamentalism behind ID, but also religion in general. Evolutionary biologist Dawkins is certainly the most well-known of them, having propagated his atheism and attacks on religious beliefs on numerous public accounts:

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ Pennock, 28.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., 353f.

⁶¹¹ Cf. Witham, 218, 225f.

⁶¹² Ibid., 74.

⁶¹³ Cf. Graffin and Provine.

The kinds of views of the universe which religious people have traditionally embraced have been puny, pathetic, and measly in comparison to the way the universe actually is. The universe presented by organized religions is a poky little medieval universe, and extremely limited.⁶¹⁴

In an interview with *beliefnet*, Dawkins also declared that religious beliefs were “a betrayal of science,” that God was an “imaginary friend” and “a lie,” and that his daughter was “much too intelligent” to become religious.⁶¹⁵ And in an article for *Newsweek*, Dawkins, while as always devaluing the IDM, asserted that “the entire educated world” was bemused by the success of ID in the United States: “When will this great country come to its senses and rejoin the civilized world?”⁶¹⁶ In the same mode, a professor of physical chemistry stated that scientists with religious beliefs could not be “a real scientist in the deepest sense of the world because they [religious beliefs] are such alien categories of knowledge.”⁶¹⁷ In *Intelligent Thought*, Dawkins, along with Scott Artran and Steven Pinker, continues to step on religion’s turf, though in a much more moderate language.⁶¹⁸ Artran for example rather regretfully notes that science, which he generally considers to be a secular ideology, would probably never “replace religion in the lives of most people,”⁶¹⁹ because religious beliefs were inherent to the human mind: “Religion has endured in nearly all cultures [...] because humans are faced with problems they can’t solve.”⁶²⁰ Finally, Pinker flat-out denies that NOMA is possible and that morality could only be understood and found “through secular moral reasoning,”⁶²¹ wondering “that so many people take seriously an association between religion and morality in the first place.”⁶²² This faction of the science community, united by a militantly atheistic outlook on life, often attacking religious beliefs, then creates an extreme “us versus them” dichotomy between science and religion and engages in stereotyping religious believers as uneducated and unintelligent. To them, there is simply no place for religion in the sciences. Consequently, the *Center for Inquiry*, an organization which focuses “on defending the values of scientific naturalism and secular humanism,”⁶²³ issued a “Declaration in Defense of Science and Secularism,” endorsed and signed by dozens of scientists, in which they declared the inextricable link between science and secularism.⁶²⁴

These more extreme views naturally fall back to the broader science community and enable critics

⁶¹⁴ Quoted in: Michael Ruse, “Darwinism and the Problem of Evil,” *Darwin’s Nemesis: Philip Johnson and the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 139. Note that although Ruse is featured in *Darwin’s Nemesis*, he is an outspoken critic of Intelligent Design who has established personal friendships with some within the IDM. He is thus, not surprisingly, featured as the sole “friendly” critic.

⁶¹⁵ Quoted in: Laura Sheahan, “The Problem with God: Interview with Richard Dawkins,” *beliefnet.com*, http://www.beliefnet.com/story/178/story_17889.html.

⁶¹⁶ Dawkins, “Unintelligent Design.” It has to be noted that Dawkins, who repeatedly invokes the group of educated countries, is British.

⁶¹⁷ Quoted in: Witham, 198.

⁶¹⁸ Cf. Richard Dawkins, “Intelligent Aliens,” *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. John Brockman (New York: Vintage Books, 2006).

⁶¹⁹ Artran, 127.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, 135.

⁶²¹ Steven Pinker, “Evolution and Ethics,” *Intelligent Thought: Science Versus the Intelligent Design Movement*, ed. John Brockman (New York: Vintage Books, 2006) 143.

⁶²² *Ibid.*

⁶²³ *Center for Inquiry*, <http://www.cfidc.org/about.html>.

⁶²⁴ *Center for Inquiry*, “Declaration in Defense of Science and Secularism,” <http://www.cfidc.org/declaration.html>.

of evolution to label evolutionary biologists and proponents of natural selection and common ancestry as “god-hating individuals” and adherers of the “belief system of Neo-Darwinism” or secular humanism whose sole agenda consists of ridding the world of God and religion.⁶²⁵ Thus, the propagation of atheism on part of scientists has among others been criticized by Gould and Susskind, who had both warned that this would be counterproductive and would only do damage to the image and reputation of science and evolution with the American public.⁶²⁶

4.3.2. ID in Mass Media Discourse: Echoes of the Scopes Trial

From new transmitters came the old stupidities.

—Bertolt Brecht, *New Age*⁶²⁷

As described in the introduction, the ID controversy created a media frenzy and hence can doubtlessly be regarded as a media-discursive mega event in Jäger’s sense.⁶²⁸ The Dover case produced nationwide headlines and up until today, the conflict between evolution and ID, between science and religion, has its firm place in newspaper Op-Eds, talk radio shows, in internet message boards and forums, and television newscasts.⁶²⁹

The media of mass communication enjoy an elevated and special position in public discourse and society. Scatamburlo believes that the media produce “the very fabric of everyday life”⁶³⁰ and thus enjoy a hegemonic function that enables them to wield considerable social, cultural, and political power.⁶³¹ Caldas-Coulthard observes that people in Western societies “are exposed to media language more than any other kind of language”⁶³² and that the media thus are not only agenda-setters but also play a crucial role in shaping realities.⁶³³ Denis McQuail explains that the significance of the mass media is based, first and foremost, on their role as a power resource, “a potential means of influence, control and innovation in society; the primary means of transmission and source of information essential to the working of most social institutions.”⁶³⁴ Furthermore, the media are also the location or rather the arena where events, issues, and problems are discussed. Finally, the media are “a major source of definitions and images of social reality; [...] the place where [...] culture and

⁶²⁵ Cf. Pennock, 26f.

⁶²⁶ Cf. Gould, 209f. Cf. also Susskind, 29.

⁶²⁷ Bertolt Brecht, “New Age,” *Poems: 1913-1956* (New York: Methuen, Inc. 1976).

⁶²⁸ Cf. Jäger, 48.

⁶²⁹ Cf. Jason Rosenhouse and Glenn Branch, “Media Coverage of ‘Intelligent Design’,” *Bioscience* March 2006, Vol. 56 No. 3, 247.

⁶³⁰ Scatamburlo, 134.

⁶³¹ Cf. *ibid.* “Mass media” are here defined as including national, regional, and local newspapers, magazines, the large commercial television and radio broadcasting networks (Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 300f.; McQuail 10f.). Due to the limited space of this work as well as the difficulties in obtaining and thus examining sources from both television and radio, my analysis will focus on the print media and their respective websites.

⁶³² Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard, “Cross-Cultural Representations of ‘Otherness’ in Media Discourse,” *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity*, ed. Gilbert Weiss, Ruth Wodak (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 274.

⁶³³ Cf. *ibid.*, 274f.

⁶³⁴ Denis McQuail, *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction* (London: Sage Publications, Third Edition, 1994) 1.

the values of societies and groups are constructed, stored and most visibly expressed.”⁶³⁵ Hunter thus deduces that the mass media “actually define reality in a society”⁶³⁶ by selecting the events that are newsworthy, by framing the debate and defining groups and individuals, and by determining what is socially and culturally acceptable.⁶³⁷

Based on the conceptions of Jürgen Habermas, the discursive space of a culture or society is generally called the public sphere in the social sciences. However, according to Habermas, mass media and mass products have transformed this public sphere from a space of rational-critical debate into a depoliticized sphere marked by passive consumption and by advertising, in which the mass media replaced the “dominated and dumbed down”⁶³⁸ individual as the main communicator: “[T]he world fashioned by the mass media is a public sphere in appearance only.”⁶³⁹ This view has been criticized as too simplistic a depiction of the relationship and the interplay between the mass media, the public, and social groups. According to Roberts and Crossley, Habermas’s disdain for the media causes him to ignore the manifold ways in which individuals and groups actively use the mass media for manipulation, propaganda, and the exercise of power.⁶⁴⁰

Consequently, the media provide the sphere, the space and place of the construction and reproduction of social reality, of power, of identity, of knowledge. Hence, in the culture wars setting, “[v]ital to any group’s preservation of a distinctive worldview and way of life is its ability to control information and ideas.”⁶⁴¹ Dominant societal and cultural groups therefore aim to assert their authority and their position of power by creating a “regime of representation” and attempt to exclude competing groups and opinions from the discourse – by setting “the limits of acceptable thinking”⁶⁴² through the control of the mass media and by limiting their access to its institutions.⁶⁴³

Not surprisingly, given these mechanisms and characteristics of the media, actors in cultural conflicts permanently raise questions “of truth, bias and manipulation.”⁶⁴⁴ Within the conservative counterculture and the evangelical subculture, the story of the liberal bias of the mass media is an established fact. The IDM and sympathetic groups thus emphatically and permanently portray themselves as victims of the liberal and secular media. The Discovery Institute, for example, declares that the misreporting of ID in the media had prompted them to launch the blog www.evolutionsnews.org to counter the sloppy, inaccurate and often overtly biased coverage of “the scientific controversy over

⁶³⁵ Ibid.

⁶³⁶ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 174.

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

⁶³⁸ John Michael Roberts and Nick Crossley, “Introduction,” *After Habermas: New Perspectives in the Public Sphere*, eds. John Michael Roberts and Nick Crossley (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing/The Sociological Review, 2004) 6.

⁶³⁹ Quoted in: Craig Calhoun, “Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere,” *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Ma: The MIT Press, 1992) 1. In his conception, Habermas located the emerging bourgeois public sphere, in which free citizens engaged in rational discourse, in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century France, Germany, and Great Britain.

⁶⁴⁰ Cf. Roberts and Crossley, 2f.

⁶⁴¹ Bruce, 225.

⁶⁴² Powers, 237.

⁶⁴³ Weiss and Wodak, 15.

⁶⁴⁴ Caldas-Coulthard, 276.

Darwinian evolution.”⁶⁴⁵ The IDM thus uses the blog to reframe the discourse and turn it into a scientific controversy over “Darwinian evolution” and not over ID. Furthermore, the blog is seen as a tool to create a counterhegemonic discourse in which the bias of the media plays the central role: the “Proof that the Media is Biased Against ID”⁶⁴⁶ is officially announced, journalists are singled out and attacked as Darwinian partisans, and the media is accused of actively propagating and recommending bias in the coverage of ID.⁶⁴⁷ Other groups like Newsbuster, which states that it is determined to “expos[e] and combat[...] liberal Media Bias,” the conservative Media Research Center, or Denyse O’Leary, a journalist with close ties to the Discovery Institute, who accuses the media of “denouncing ID in unquack (the groupthink language of old mainstream media),”⁶⁴⁸ have joined the choir.

Interestingly, the other side also feels misrepresented by the media. Writing in *Bioscience*, Rosenhouse and Branch assert that a “misconceived concern for balance frequently results in equal time being accorded to biologists and creationists, creating the illusion of scientific equivalence,”⁶⁴⁹ and that cable television in particular showed a bias towards creationism. Similarly, in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, Mooney and Nisbet advance the opinion that while science writers covered the controversy adequately by stressing the importance and acceptance of evolution within the scientific community, others (political reporters, generalists, anchors, etc.) neglected the scientific validity of evolution in favor of giving balanced coverage to the “scientific-sounding claims of the scientific creationists” and therefore “provided a springboard for anti-evolutionist criticism” of evolution.⁶⁵⁰

Hence, the question remains: Which side is treated unfairly by the media? The IDM, in accordance with the conservative media narrative, adopts the stance that there is a liberal and secular media bias per se, a claim they back up with various examples on their blog and with polls that show that a majority of journalists in the “media elite” profess to follow a secular outlook on life.⁶⁵¹ The science community, on the other hand, denies that there is a clear bias towards evolution and more broadly disputes, like many within the progressive and liberal community, that a liberal bias exists at all.⁶⁵² However, they neither entertain the notion that the media in general has a pro-ID

⁶⁴⁵ Discovery Institute, “Updated: News Coverage of Evolution Critiqued Daily,” <http://www.discovery.org/scripts/viewDB/index.php?command=view&id=2372>.

⁶⁴⁶ Casey Luskin, “Proof that the Media is Biased Against ID,” http://www.evolutionnews.org/2006/10/proof_the_media.html.

⁶⁴⁷ Cf. Bruce Chapman, “There’s Not Enough Bias in the Media!” 15 Sept. 2005, <http://www.discovery.org/scripts/viewDB/index.php?command=view&id=2857>. Cf. also John West, “Inside the Mind of the New York Times: My Exchange with Cornelia Dean, Evolution Partisan,” 5 Nov. 2006, http://www.evolutionnews.org/2006/11/inside_the_mind_of_the_new_yor.html.

⁶⁴⁸ Denyse O’Leary, “American Media Discover the Intelligent Design Controversy – And Let the Big Story Get Away,” <http://www.4truth.net/site/apps/nl/content3.asp?c=hiKXLbPNLrF&b=1171681&ct=981297>. Cf. also <http://www.mediaresearch.org/specialreports/2005/sum/sum032805.asp>. Cf. also Tim Graham and Ken Sheperd, “Religion in TV News: Secular Orthodoxy Still Reigns,” *The Media Research Center*, 28 March 2005, http://www.mediaresearch.org/specialreports/2005/pdf/Religion_Study_2005.pdf. Cf. also Dave Pierre, “LA Times Columnist Slams Intelligent Design as a ‘Ruse’ and a ‘Ploy,’” *NewsBusters.org*, 30 July 2005, <http://newsbusters.org/node/6650>.

⁶⁴⁹ Cf. Rosenhouse and Branch, 247.

⁶⁵⁰ Cf. Chris Mooney and Matthew C. Nisbet, “Undoing Darwin,” *Columbia Journalism Review*, September/October 2005, <http://cjrarchives.org/issues/2005/5/mooney.asp>.

⁶⁵¹ Cf. Witham, 238.

⁶⁵² Cf., for example, Eric Alterman, *What Liberal Media? The Truth About Bias and the News* (New York:

bias, with probably the exception of cable television, they just demand that the media embrace their role as the gatekeepers of authoritative science by excluding the voices of ID proponents or rather limiting the space devoted to them.⁶⁵³ Mooney and Nisbet base their conclusions – that the media actually distort the scientific validity of evolution and are ultimately responsible for the creation of the controversy by oftentimes giving balanced treatment to ID and thus making it appear as a scientific theory – on the systematic analysis of 17 months of press coverage of the mass media.⁶⁵⁴ However, another study, which had analyzed 575 articles of major newspapers, finds that ID was for the most part described as a religious movement and that the coverage of its scientific validity was largely skeptical.⁶⁵⁵ Finally, another study by Justin D. Martin examining the newspaper coverage of a less publicized but still widely debated case involving ID in Ohio in 2004 comes to the conclusion that the coverage of ID was overall fairly balanced and that a slight majority of the examined articles was actually neutral. However, almost half of the articles were negative while also carrying creationist descriptors when referring to ID. Another finding is that editorials and columns were distinctively more negative than hard news, which tended to be mostly neutral.⁶⁵⁶

Though I did not conduct a thorough quantitative analysis, during my research of the Dover case, I did not come along any newspaper articles or editorials in the mass media which endorsed Intelligent Design, neither online nor in printed form.⁶⁵⁷ Thus, I can only support the findings of Martin: The hard news tended to be rather neutral, reporting the events while giving space to opponents and proponents of ID. Furthermore, even where creationist descriptors were used and where ID was described as religion, one cannot generally speak of media bias. Articles in the science section of newspapers, although generally denying the scientific validity of ID, often aim at refuting it on the basis of scientific arguments without engaging in simple name-calling.⁶⁵⁸ Thus, disagreeing with ID does not automatically imply that a liberal or secular bias exists. This being said, given that the studies revealed that a considerable part of the coverage on ID is negative, the mass media anyhow play an important role in reproducing the dominant role of scientific knowledge and in invoking the overarching frames of the culture wars and the warfare between science and religion. Diane Winston diagnosed that the mass media commonly and often prematurely follow these conflict nar-

Basic Books, 2003). Alterman comes to the conclusion that the media are actually very conservative.

⁶⁵³ Mooney and Nisbet.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁵ Cf. Justin D. Martin, Kaye D. Trammell, Daphne Landers, Jeanne M. Valois, and Terri Bailey, "Journalism and the Debate Over Origins: Newspaper Coverage of Intelligent Design," *Journal of Media and Religion*, 2005, Vol. 5, No. 1, 49-61.

⁶⁵⁶ Justin D. Martin, "Religion, Science and Public Education: Newspaper Coverage of the Origin's Debate in Ohio's Public Schools," December 2004, <http://www.worldcatlibraries.org/wcpa/oclc/57735016?page=frame&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpurl.fcla.edu%2Ffcla%2Fetd%2FUFE0008950&title=&linktype=digitalObject&detail=>, 33f, 48f.

⁶⁵⁷ I did however read and save to my hard drive literally hundreds of editorials, columns, and news articles from the online editions and various American newspapers via the Google news email subscription of the search terms "intelligent design" and "creationism."

⁶⁵⁸ Cf. for example H. Allen Orr, "Devolution," *The New Yorker*, 30 May 2005, http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/05/30/050530fa_fact.

ratives because “[i]t’s familiar, reliable, and a lot easier than research and thinking.”⁶⁵⁹ Accordingly, articles like “God vs. Science”⁶⁶⁰ (*TIME*) or more subtle simply “God or Gorilla”⁶⁶¹ (*Harper’s*) amplify these master frames. Additionally, as both Larson and Tothero argue, journalists often resort to the clichés and stereotypes transported by the Scopes trial and *Inherit the Wind* in their interpretations of Dover and evolution/creationism cases in general.⁶⁶² Headlines such as “Inherit the Wind, Redux”⁶⁶³ (*Washington Post*) or the above-mentioned “God or Gorilla: A Darwin Descendant at the Dover monkey trial” clearly weave these articles into the larger historical context of the evolution controversy and thus invoke the corresponding frames with all their negative connotations and historically grown group stereotypes. Other journalists use a more metaphorical language: In his article “Darwinian Warfare,” *Rolling Stone* author Matt Taibbi states that “America can’t get the monkey off its back,”⁶⁶⁴ while over at *Newsweek*, senior editor Jonathan Alter explains that the ballyhoo over evolution started by the IDM was just a new tale of “monkey see, monkey do”:⁶⁶⁵ “Offering ID as an alternative to evolution is a cruel joke. It walks and talks like science but in the lab performs worse than medieval alchemy.”⁶⁶⁶ Considering that the Scopes trial is also known as the “monkey trial,” the term “monkey” used in this context carries considerable cultural baggage and can be interpreted as a metaphor for the “backwardness” of ID and its supporters. The descriptor “medieval alchemy” further clarifies the intention and enhances this negative image, and Alter makes his opinion of ID clear by labeling it as “religious dogma.”⁶⁶⁷ In another allusion to the historical predecessors, the actors in the Dover case were also repeatedly depicted in the mold of the main protagonists of the Scopes trial, William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow, whose current images in the popular memory were created by the Broadway play *Inherit the Wind*, as well as those of other historical court cases. In his description of “Scopes II,” Taibbi portrayed Dr. Brian Alters, an expert witness on behalf of the plaintiffs, as “a distinguished-looking man with silver hair,” “a Harvard man and professor of science education,” and cast him into the role “of the learned progressive come to slay the dragon of fundamentalist ignorance.”⁶⁶⁸ On the other hand, Robert J. Muise, one of the lawyers of the defense, is pejoratively pictured as “a glum-looking Christian attorney,” a “loser” and “unhappy-looking man” who looked “like a fourth-grader dressed by his mom”:

Muise was saddled with all of this — the bad haircut, the droopy face, the silly theory, the consciousness that everybody who’s ever seen *Inherit the Wind* was going to consider him the bad guy at this trial. Worse, he was stuck with clients who were clearly on the wrong side of the law, and a case that, in an honest courtroom, even

⁶⁵⁹ Diane Winston, “When the Conflict Narrative Doesn’t Fit,” *Nieman Reports: Intelligent Design*, Vol. 59, No. 4, Winter 2005, 13.

⁶⁶⁰ David van Biema, “God vs. Science,” *TIME*, November 13, 2006.

⁶⁶¹ Matthew Chapman, “God or Gorilla,” *Harper’s Magazine*, February 2006.

⁶⁶² Cf. Larson 119. Cf. also Gailon Tothero, “Probing Beneath the Surface of the Intelligent Design Controversy,” *Nieman Reports: Intelligent Design*, Vol. 59, No. 4, Winter 2005, 17.

⁶⁶³ Christine Rosen, “Inherit the Wind, Redux: How intelligent design and evolution clashed in a Pennsylvania Town,” *Washington Post*, 25 Feb. 2007.

⁶⁶⁴ Matt Taibbi, “Darwinian Warfare,” *Rolling Stone*, 3 Nov. 2005, Issue 986.

⁶⁶⁵ Cf. Jonathan Alter, “Monkey See, Monkey Do,” *Newsweek*, 15 Aug. 2005.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁸ Taibbi.

Johnnie Cochran couldn't win.⁶⁶⁹

Similarly, Chapman describes the legal team of the plaintiffs as “a team of highly skilled professionals operating in an atmosphere of frictionless amiability,” while the other side was characterized as “a dysfunctional family.”⁶⁷⁰ The final example comes from the *Philadelphia Magazine*, where Andrew Putz portrayed two members of the plaintiff’s legal team as “wisecracking, cheesesteak-loving Philly lawyers,” “archetypically normal [...] American guys” who were “lifelong practicing” Christians, as opposed to the defendants, the members of the Dover School Board “who were just bumptious, venal liars.”⁶⁷¹ The decision in the Dover Case by Judge Jones, who had ruled that ID is another brand of creationism devoid of science, was applauded by many in the mass media: the *Philadelphia Daily News* titled “Dover decision smart design”⁶⁷² and an editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* simply called it “An intelligent decision”⁶⁷³ while the *Boston Globe* was seemingly relieved that the decision had “restored faith both in rational thinking and in the independent judiciary.”⁶⁷⁴

While these examples, consistent with the findings of the discussed studies, support the notion that part of the mass media coverage was biased against ID, even more revealing of the ideological positions of the mass media might be another important section of daily newspapers and magazines: the editorial cartoons.



⁶⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁰ Chapman.

⁶⁷¹ Andrew Putz, “Darwin’s Angels,” *Philadelphia Magazine*, June 2006.

⁶⁷² Perry A. Zirkel, “Dover decision smart design,” *Philadelphia Daily News*, 4 Jan. 2006.

⁶⁷³ “An intelligent decision,” *Los Angeles Times*, Editorial, 22 Dec. 2005.

⁶⁷⁴ “Cutting Through The Fog,” *Boston Globe*, Editorial, 21 Dec. 2005.



Fig. 3. All cartoons are drawn from Sahotra Sarkar's blog, who collects editorial cartoons and other images related to the ID controversy. http://webapp.utexas.edu/blogs/archives/sarkalab/cat_onward_christian_soldiers.html, 01/30/2006. Going clockwise and starting with the cartoon on the top left, I will number these cartoons as ID Cartoons 1-6..

Cartoons are important communicative devices comparable to Op-Eds or editorials as they are able to arouse reactions from outrage to delight in the audience: "When editorial cartoons are at their best, they are like switchblades: simple and to the point, they cut deeply and leave an impression."⁶⁷⁵ According to Caswell, cartoons are also the most read items on editorial pages. While a cartoon represents the personal opinion of its creator, the cartoonist naturally does not want to alienate neither media nor his editors and thus usually has a well-grounded knowledge of his audience. Thus, editorial cartoons can reveal much about the ideological presuppositions of both the respective newspaper and its audience.⁶⁷⁶ Political cartoons usually consist of two elements: "caricature, which parodies the individual, and allusion, which creates the situation or context into which the individual is placed."⁶⁷⁷

The cartoons pictured above are again just a few select examples of a vast panoply of possible sources. However, cartoon number one is actually the only editorial cartoon of a newspaper I could find which was in support of ID. It appeared in the *Indianapolis Star* and portrays Darwinists as dogmatic scientists unwilling to consider and debate ID. A familiar metaphor, in this case visual, is also part of this cartoon: in an inversion of the common stereotype, the Darwinist scientists are caricatured as monkeys, looking dazed and confused, most likely because of the challenge by the scientific theory of ID. Cartoon number four, by nationally syndicated cartoonist Ben Sargent, uses the same visual metaphor, only from a diametrically opposed perspective. The proponent of ID is represented as a monkey who is too uneducated to write the ordered punishment by the judge on the chalkboard: "I will not try to sneak my religious beliefs into the public classroom under the guise of science..." Cartoon number two, which was published in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, also dissects them

⁶⁷⁵ Chris Lamb, *Drawn to Extremes: The Use and Abuse of Editorial Cartoons* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004) 42.

⁶⁷⁶ Cf. Lucy Shelton Caswell, "Drawing Swords: War in American Editorial Cartoons," *American Journalism* 21 (2), 15f.

⁶⁷⁷ Dan Backer, "Mugwumps and the Masses: A Brief History of Political Cartoons," <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA96/PUCK/part1.html>.

unfavorably as rather gawky members of the Christian Right who are forcefully trying to reintroduce religion into the classroom. Cartoon number three is by Pat Oliphant, another renowned cartoonist whose work regularly appears in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, who illustrates a distressed God who laments that while trying to come up with some sort of Intelligent Design, “all I keep coming up with is a bunch of simple-minded, right-wing, fundamentalist, religious fanatics. I think I’ll just let the whole thing evolve.” The two remaining cartoons also convey the same stereotypes: Kansans, whose state saw another challenge to evolution shortly after the Dover case, are characterized as backward, anti-intellectual retards who can barely utter a complete sentence.

The mass media broadly use the same discursive strategies as the actors of the science community. The editorial cartoons, though exaggerated, partly reflect the social reality and the attitudes of the science community as well as secular and progressive groups and unambiguously identify and name the opponent.⁶⁷⁸ The columns and cartoons alike evoke the frames, labels, and stereotypes already observed in the science discourse. Yet, these stereotypes are often presented in a far more harsh and pejorative textual and visual rhetoric. Serving as mechanisms for social control, the stereotypes then play an important role in reproducing and maintaining the existing power structures and in strengthening the role of science as the dominant and authoritative source of knowledge. One has to note, however, that the modes of exclusion are not as pronounced as in the science discourse: the studies on the media coverage of ID already mentioned that a large segment of the news stories featured rather objective accounts of the controversy with both sides being conceded the same amount of airtime and space in print stories. Furthermore, leading design proponents such as Behe (“Design for Living,” Feb. 7, 2005), Senator Sam Brownback (“What I Think About Evolution,” May 31, 2007), or Cardinal Schönborn (“Finding Design in Nature, July 7, 2005) all published Op-Eds in the *New York Times* and thus were able to get their arguments across. Lastly, all the talk of the liberal biased media seems to be invalid, at least with regard to ID. A study conducted by *The New Republic* revealed that even the vast majority of conservative journalists steadily oppose Intelligent Design.⁶⁷⁹ Consequently, conservative pundits like Charles Krauthammer or Sharon Begley of the *Wall Street Journal*, for example, have come out in defense of evolution, with Begley – paraphrased – calling ID a “twin of creationism”⁶⁸⁰ and with Krauthammer concluding that to impose ID and therefore faith “on the teaching of evolution is not just to invite ridicule but to earn it.”⁶⁸¹

The mass media certainly tilts towards being biased against ID: It is consistently marked as an attempt to insert religion – disguised as science – back into the classroom. Though the science community criticizes that ID enjoys a balanced treatment, especially in the hard news, the mass media overall do not question the supremacy of scientific knowledge and thus only solidify its corresponding “regime of truth” by telling the corresponding cultural narratives, which are invoked through

⁶⁷⁸ Cf. Lamb, 34.

⁶⁷⁹ Cf. David Klinghoffer, “Designs On Us: Conservatives on Darwin vs. ID,” *National Review*, 3 Aug. 2005, <http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/klinghoffer200508030811.asp>.

⁶⁸⁰ Sharon Begley, “Yes, Evolution Still Has Unanswered Questions: That’s How Science Is,” *Wall Street Journal*, 3 June 2006.

⁶⁸¹ Charles Krauthammer, “Let’s Have No More Monkey Trials,” *Newsweek*, 8 Aug. 2005.

the use of specific historical media frames mostly in editorials and columns. Thus, though a large part of the reporting is neutral, the counternarrative of the IDM does not break into the discourse of the mass media. With the exception of *Fox News* and other cable channels and the occasional Op-Ed by a proponent of Intelligent Design, the IDM and its allies have not been successful in creating a counterdiscourse in the realm of the mass media, which is often equated with and takes on the function of the broader public sphere of a given society. However, the at least partly pro-evolution bias of the mass media is compensated by the vast and ever-expanding media of the conservative and evangelical subculture. Crossley noted that “different social groups tend to buy different newspapers,”⁶⁸² which allows the conclusion that groups sympathetic to the claims of ID, which the IDM itself has identified as largely evangelical groups, are not affected by the image purported by the more traditional mass media. As Majid Tehranian noted: “In these separatist circles, mass media play a limited role. The religious networks, schools, and small media serve as the main channels.”⁶⁸³

4.3.3. ID in Subcultural Discourse

It's only half completed I'm afraid - we haven't even finished burying the artificial dinosaur skeletons in the crust yet, then we have the Tertiary and Quaternary Periods of the Cenozoic Era to lay down, and ...

—Slartibartfast, *The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*⁶⁸⁴

We have evidence that a Flying Spaghetti Monster created the universe.

—Bobby Henderson, *Open Letter to Kansas School Board*⁶⁸⁵

As described in chapter two, societies are marked by a constant struggle between competing social groups. Certain groups, facing modes of exclusion, not only challenge the cultural hegemony and the corresponding hegemonic discourse but also from their own counterdiscourses which are confined to their own respective subcultures. Hence, though the discourse of the mass media is often perceived as the inherent dominant feature of the public sphere and though Habermas originally envisioned his public sphere as a singular, all-encompassing and bourgeois space for rational discourse, newer conceptions have challenged this view.⁶⁸⁶ These new conceptions describe the public sphere as a discursive space marked by social groups, by group identities, and particular self-interests. Hence, the illusion of the public sphere as a neutral and inclusive debating ground withers away. Relations of power, structures of dominance, different modes of exclusion – the inherent so-

⁶⁸² Nick Crossley, “On systematically distorted communications: Bourdieu and the socio-analysis of publics,” *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*, eds. Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing/The Sociological Review, 2004) 105.

⁶⁸³ Majid Tehranian, “Fundamentalist Impact on Education and the Media: An Overview,” *Fundamentalisms and Society. Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993) 325.

⁶⁸⁴ In Douglas Adams’ novel, Slartibartfast is an alien whose assignment is the construction of the earth. The whole novel can be accessed here: http://hitch14.tripod.com/chapter_26.htm.

⁶⁸⁵ Bobby Henderson, “Open Letter to Kansas School Board,” January 2005, <http://www.venganza.org/about/open-letter>. Henderson is the “prophet” of the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster. He wrote that Letter to the Kansas School Board as a response to the attempt of the board to redefine the state’s science standards in order to be able to include Intelligent Design in the science curriculum.

⁶⁸⁶ Cf. Calhoun, 1f.

cial hierarchies are always at play in these post-Habermasian conceptions of the public sphere.⁶⁸⁷ Additionally, in view of multicultural and differentiated modern societies with a multitude of different groups, Habermas' version of a singular space has been contested by Gardiner's description of "wild publics"⁶⁸⁸ or Calhoun's inversion of a "sphere of publics,"⁶⁸⁹ which comprises "multiple, sometimes overlapping or contending, public spheres."⁶⁹⁰ For example, new social movements might form critical sub-publics and alternative publics, or they might even attempt to appear as *the* public with regard to specific issues and events.⁶⁹¹ With an eye on marginalized, powerless, or subordinate social groups who are often excluded from the discourse in the main public sphere or spheres, Nancy Fraser also introduces her concept of "subaltern counter-publics," which signify "parallel discursive arenas" where subordinate groups engage in counterdiscourses and thus are able to reclaim the interpretational power over their own identities.⁶⁹²

In the following, I will in brief introduce the conservative evangelical counterdiscourse as well as the subcultural discourse within the progressive community. Due to the diversity and the scope of the different discourses on ID, I will focus on two specific examples: on Ann Coulter's book *Godless* and on the parody religion of the "The Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster."

4.3.3.1. "Godless": The Conservative Evangelical Subculture

They say the whale "evolved" when a bear fell into the ocean.

—Ann Coulter, *Godless*⁶⁹³

The literature on Christian fundamentalism and the evangelical movement in the United States generally states that, beginning in the 1920s, in an effort "to erect a counterhegemonic worldview"⁶⁹⁴ to counter the emergence of the secular state, these groups started to create their own distinctive subcultures outside of the American mainstream.⁶⁹⁵ Finally, with more sophisticated organizations such as the "Moral Majority" or the "Christian Coalition" and the advent of new means of mass communication in the 1980s and 1990s, they had arrived at their goal:

They had constructed for themselves a culturally homogenous society to support their fundamentalist subculture. They had managed to ensure that most representations of the outside world came filtered through fundamentalist media. They had provided themselves with fundamentalist alternatives to secular institutions.⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁸⁷ Michael E. Gardiner, "Wild publics and grotesque symposiums: Habermas and Bakhtin on dialogue, everyday life and the public sphere," *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*, eds. Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing/The Sociological Review, 2004) 43.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid 42.

⁶⁸⁹ Michael Eric Dyson, "What's Derrida Got To Do With Jesus? Rhetoric, Black Religion and Theory," *One Nation Under God? Religion and American Culture*, eds. Marjorie Garber and Rebecca L. Walkowitz (New York: Routledge, 1999) 85.

⁶⁹⁰ Calhoun, 37.

⁶⁹¹ Cf. Roberts and Crossley, 9. Cf. also Meyer and Moors, 12.

⁶⁹² Cf. Roberts and Crossley, 15. Cf. also Dyson, 85.

⁶⁹³ Ann Coulter, *Godless: The Church of Liberalism* (New York: Crown Forum, 2006) 229.

⁶⁹⁴ Moore, 62.

⁶⁹⁵ Cf. Larson, 232f. I have already distinguished between fundamentalism and evangelicalism in the chapter three. Hence, the fundamentalist groups are included in the much broader and less militant category "evangelical" in the following.

⁶⁹⁶ Bruce, 226.

Today, evangelical groups have created a vast and powerful media empire. In *America's Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power*, Viguerie and Franke depict the broad array of Christian alternatives to what they call the "established media": Christian radio stations and magazines, books and movies, video games and Christian rock music, Christian cable television and literally thousands of Christian and more specifically evangelical websites have created a vast reservoir for counterdiscourses on any culture war-related issue. As Viguerie and Franke triumphantly proclaim: "...an elitist clique cannot control the news today."⁶⁹⁷

In the new millennium, with evangelicals being the fastest growing and largest religious group in America and with the president being a conservative born-again Christian, evangelical groups have become more visible in the American society and have started crisscrossing between their subculture and American mainstream culture.⁶⁹⁸

As noted earlier, the controversy over ID and conflicts about evolution in general clearly fit Hunter's culture wars pattern. Yet apart from being seen as the central symbolic site of the perceived warfare between science and religion, Hunter notes that the clash between evolution and creationism⁶⁹⁹ is also one of the major components in another major battlefield of the culture wars: the conflict over the content of public education, which of course played a major role in triggering the current conflict over evolution.⁷⁰⁰ In his view, this conflict is inevitable because schools "are the primary institutional means of reproducing community and national identity"⁷⁰¹ and thus become contested sites in the struggle for control over the minds of the youth.⁷⁰²

The question is not only what will be taught and how (...), but what attitudes will be developed toward knowledge and practice, toward how things will be known and how "truths" will be established.⁷⁰³

The class room then becomes a space of interaction between science and religion in the form of the beliefs of teachers, students and parents. Naturally, Christian parents in general want their children to have a Christian education. Yet, in the minds of evangelicals and conservative Christians, public schools and the Department of Education, instead of teaching about Christian morals and values,

⁶⁹⁷ Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke, *America's Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power* (Chicago: Bonus Books, 2004) 322.

⁶⁹⁸ Cf. John C. Green, *The American Religious Landscape and Political Attitudes: A Baseline for 2004*, http://www.uakron.edu/bliss/docs/Religious_Landscape_2004.pdf. In 2004, 26.3 percent of the American population identified as evangelical Protestants.

⁶⁹⁹ When Hunter wrote *Culture Wars* in 1991, ID was not yet on the agenda of the culture wars and was only beginning to take shape in the minds of some fellows of the Discovery Institute in Seattle.

⁷⁰⁰ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 197ff. School prayer or Bible reading are other issues in the conflict over education.

⁷⁰¹ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 198.

⁷⁰² Cf. Susan Rose, "Christian Fundamentalism and Education in the United States," *Fundamentalisms and Society. Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993) 453.

⁷⁰³ Everett Mendelsohn, "Religious Fundamentalism and the Sciences," *Fundamentalisms and Society. Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993) 38.

spread and preach what they call “secular humanism.”⁷⁰⁴ Marsden pointed out that the conception comes from neo-evangelicalism, which, beginning in the 1950s, considered secular humanism “as virtually a religious force threatening to displace Christianity entirely from the culture.”⁷⁰⁵ Marsden himself defines secular humanism as “an ideology with a quasi-religious character [which] involves a number of naturalistic beliefs,”⁷⁰⁶ thus reinforcing the assumption of evangelical groups who brandish it as either an anti-Christian and relativist religion or ideology. The conception of secular humanism as both a religion and ideology remains very broad and vague, though, and requires a broad definition of religion in the Geertzian sense, who considered religion to be a cultural system.⁷⁰⁷ In 1987, an Alabamian judge ruled secular humanism a religion, following the argumentation of 624 plaintive evangelicals who had claimed that secular humanism was a religious belief promoted by the public school system, which constituted an unconstitutional endorsement of religion.⁷⁰⁸ Progressive and secular groups in turn deny the existence of a clique of secular humanists who aim to take over public education. They argue that “secularism in the school is nothing more than non-sectarianism” and that the teaching of human values such as responsibility and individual autonomy is not part of any ideology.⁷⁰⁹ Rather, some warn of any attempts to sneak religion back into the curriculum as a first step towards the establishment of a Christian nation.⁷¹⁰ The closest thing to an organized group of secular humanists might be the American Humanist Association (AHA) which indeed dismisses any form of religious or supernatural belief. Yet, their number is estimated to be between 3,000 to 5,000 members nationwide.⁷¹¹ They are thus far from being the powerful and influential force depicted by evangelical groups, as Barbara Parker and Christy Macy of People for the American Way have noted: “In terms, of influence, these humanists rank with militant vegetarians and agrarian anarchists, and were about as well known – until the Religious Right set out to make them famous.”⁷¹² Though the enemy has been clearly defined, he remains almost invisible. The term secular humanism seems to nothing more than a mobilizing metaphor, a common catchphrase in the culture wars, based upon unmerited reasonings. Yet, like the broader concept of the culture

⁷⁰⁴ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 201f.

⁷⁰⁵ Marsden, 108.

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁷⁰⁷ Clifford Geertz, an ethnologist and cultural theorist, formulated a very broad definition of religion as “(1) a system of symbols that act to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men, by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence, and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality, that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.” While his categorization of religion as a cultural system was not questioned, his definition of religion was criticized as being too broad, because any ideology such as Marxism, etc. would then fall into the category of religion. More narrow definitions of religion thus state that a cultural symbol system, to qualify as religion, must include references to and belief in supernatural forces or powers. Following this definition, secular humanism then would not be categorized as a religion (Cf. Martin E. Marty, “Rediscovery: Discerning Religious America,” *Critical Issues in American Religious History: A Reader*, ed. Robert R. Mathisen (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2001) 22-23).

⁷⁰⁸ Cf. Rose 458. A higher court overturned the ruling shortly thereafter, stating that there is no evidence for the accusation that public schools teach a religious belief called secular humanism.

⁷⁰⁹ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 206f.

⁷¹⁰ Cf. Wilcox, 124.

⁷¹¹ Cf. Rose, 459.

⁷¹² Quoted in: Rose, 459.

wars, the reference to godless and relativist secular humanism has become a standard interpretative paradigm of the evangelical Christian worldview.

With that in mind, it comes as no surprise that the repeated controversies over evolution have always been debated in an impassionate way. After the decision by Judge Jones in the Dover case and after the citizens of Dover had ousted those members of the school board who supported the teaching of ID, evangelical broadcaster Pat Robertson heeded a warning to the Dover community: "If there is a disaster in your area, don't turn to God. You just rejected him from your city."⁷¹³ Furthermore, with the IDM clearly identifying evangelical Christians as their base and their target group and with most of the major proponents professing to be born-again evangelicals, the reciprocal relationship between the IDM and evangelical groups has resulted in a convergence of goals, discursive strategies, and common enemies.⁷¹⁴ Albeit the IDM subtly and secretly caters to its evangelical audience, the movement to some degree is hindered by its self-imposed fetters in public discourse, as their strategy bars them from invoking too obviously religious reasoning and prescribes the use of scientific language and appeals to equality with regard to the teaching of ID in public schools.⁷¹⁵ Evangelical groups do not face nor adhere to these restrictions. Brought to the scene by the extremely successful "teach the controversy"-campaign of the IDM, evangelicals readily argue on the basis of their religious beliefs and, just like Charles Hodge almost 150 years ago, equate evolution with atheism and accuse Darwinists of being godless in their attempts to get Christianity back into the classroom.⁷¹⁶

Like so many others, conservative pundit Ann Coulter, who proclaims that she is "an extraordinarily good Christian,"⁷¹⁷ also weighed in on the controversy over Intelligent Design. She dedicated one third of her book *Godless: The Church of Liberalism* to a scolding attack on evolution. And she didn't mince matters. Her basic argument goes like this:

Liberal's creation myth is Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, which is about one notch above Scientology in scientific rigor. It's a make-believe story, based on a theory that is a tautology, with no proof in the scientist's laboratory or the fossil record – and that's after 150 years of very determined looking. We wouldn't be talking about it but for the fact that liberals think evolution disproves God.⁷¹⁸

Though her claims sound quite bizarre, this book wasn't relegated to the lunatic fringes: *Godless* debuted at No.1 on the *New York Times* bestseller list.⁷¹⁹ Given that Coulter states that she "couldn't have written about evolution without the generous tutoring of Michael Behe, David Ber-

⁷¹³ The Associated Press, "Pat Robertson warns Pennsylvania Town of Disaster," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 10 Nov. 2005.

⁷¹⁴ Cf. Keller, 162.

⁷¹⁵ Cf. Roger Downey, "Discovery's Creation," *Seattle Weekly*, 1 Feb. 2006, <http://www.seattleweekly.com/2006-02-01/news/discovery-s-creation.php>.

⁷¹⁶ Cf. *ibid.* Cf. also Frank, 207; Pennock, ix.

⁷¹⁷ "Church Militant: Ann Coulter on God, Faith, and Liberals," Interview with Ann Coulter, *beliefnet.com*, 18 Nov. 2006, http://www.beliefnet.com/story/196/story_19646.html.

⁷¹⁸ Coulter, 199.

⁷¹⁹ Cf. Meghan Daum, "Coulter's a satirist – really?" *Los Angeles Times* 24 June 2006, <http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-oe-daum24jun24,0,590157.column?coll=la-news-comment-opinions>.

linski, and William Dembski,⁷²⁰ the parallels between the discursive strategies of the IDM and the ones evident in *Godless* are hardly surprising, although Coulter's rhetoric is a lot more vicious and degrading. The title of the book already indicates her argumentation strategy: "liberalism" is depicted as a "godless religion" which "has its own cosmology, its own miracles, its own beliefs in the supernatural, its own churches, its own high priests, its own saints, its own total worldview."⁷²¹ The "church of liberalism" of course has its own doctrines: "Darwinism is a fact, people are born gay, child molesters can be rehabilitated, recycling is a virtue, and chastity not."⁷²² This is about as concise as she gets as her concept of liberalism remains devoid of any real content apart from the extreme stereotypes which can be found at the militant fringes of the culture wars. Following the example of the IDM to denote the 'Darwinian other' as a rival belief system, Coulter proclaims that Darwinism was just the "creation myth" of an extremist religion. By connecting Darwinism with liberalism, Coulter embeds the former firmly in the context of the culture wars through the invocation of the liberal/conservative dichotomy, which is a mainstay in the social conflicts of the United States. Additionally, since liberals were Democrats, and since Democrats were just "faking a belief in God"⁷²³ and denied "that we are moral beings in God's image," she creates another "us versus them" dichotomy: moral Christians versus immoral atheists. Coulter also makes it clear that she is not interested in any deeper scientific analysis and comparison of ID and evolution: "My faith and reason tell me that God created the world and I'm not particularly interested in the details. I'll find out when I meet my Maker."⁷²⁴ She mocks any notion of science by simplifying the theory of evolution to "[t]hey say the whale "evolved" when a bear fell into the ocean."⁷²⁵

In her attempt to categorize and label evolution/Darwinism as a militant and ridiculous belief system, Coulter does not shy away from using vast exaggerations and invokes every rhetorical means and label at her disposal. While the IDM consists of "real scientists"⁷²⁶ and while "Behe [has] disproved evolution"⁷²⁷ already a while ago, the "godless secularists"⁷²⁸ were just adherents of "a crazy religious cult":⁷²⁹ "Their grandiose self-conceptions to the contrary, the cult members are rarely scientists at all. They're almost always biologists – the "science with the greatest preponderance of women."⁷³⁰ While the IDM has a sophisticated theory – "They [the IDM] simply say intelligence is a force that exists in the universe and we can see its effects and what it does..."⁷³¹ – the "evolution fundamentalists"⁷³² of course have no scientific theory at all:

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*, 303.

⁷²¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷²² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁷²⁴ "Church Militant: Ann Coulter on God, Faith, and Liberals," Interview with Ann Coulter, *beliefnet.com*, 11/18/2006, http://www.beliefnet.com/story/196/story_19646.html.

⁷²⁵ *Ibid.*, 229.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, 211.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, 204.

⁷²⁸ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, 248.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, 245.

“All they have is a story. It inspires fanatical devotion from the cult simply because their story excludes a creator.” In another classical case of projection, Coulter portrays the ‘Darwinian other’ as “religious fanatics”⁷³³ who would treat “doubts about evolution as religious heresy.”⁷³⁴ Finally, she accuses the “Darwiniacs”⁷³⁵ of using misleading rhetoric to demonize the renowned scientists of the IDM while already having “persuaded the slumbering masses that anyone who questions the theory of evolution must do so out of religious fervor” by this means.⁷³⁶ Coulter’s disinterest in engaging scientifically with evolution and her aspiration to be right in any case culminates in the argument that even “[i]f evolution is true, then God created evolution.”⁷³⁷

In *Godless*, Coulter thus follows the discursive strategies of the IDM. Being tutored by the Discovery Institute fellows Dembski, Berlinski, and Behe, she focuses on the negative criticisms of evolution by pointing out gaps in evolutionary theory, thus aiming to attack the scientific validity of it, and repeats one of the central mantras of ID, saying that Behe’s theory of irreducible complexity had already disproved evolution. Yet, lacking the expert knowledge to engage in any real discussion about the shortcomings of evolution, the question of whether it is true or not becomes a question of pure belief. In order to be able to settle this question of belief with extra-scientific knowledge, the belief therefore needs to be projected onto the ‘other’. Defined as a rival belief system, Coulter then bombards and devalues, without any distinction, liberals/Democrats/secularists/Darwiniacs with cultural stereotypes, setting up rhetorical smoke-screens to deflect the attention away from questions of the scientific validity and the religious motivations of ID. Emphasizing the fundamental differences “between our religion and theirs,”⁷³⁸ Coulter has turned to create modes of exclusion between “us” and “them.”

Like the IDM, she has attacked the scientific validity of evolution, she has defined and labeled Darwinism as a religious belief system, she has labeled and stereotyped the ‘Darwinian other’ as militant and fanatic, as irrational and dogmatic, she has portrayed the IDM as victims of the secular elites and the pseudo-scientific establishment. Turning the discourse into a contest of beliefs by claiming that the opponent aims for a godless society has enabled Coulter to invoke the Christian God into her discursive argumentation and has justified her extreme language in this conflict of worldviews. The intentional escalation furthermore has allowed her to easily make it fit the conflict narrative of the warfare between the perceived (pseudo-)science and religion as well as the culture wars model. Additionally, once these frames have been activated, the intensely polarized discourse strengthens in-group cohesion by demarcating the devalued and ridiculed other from the self. Thus, since a real and even remotely rational discourse with the other is not the goal of Coulter’s discourse fragment, the impact of the text thus is obviously

⁷³² Ibid., 236.

⁷³³ Ibid., 245.

⁷³⁴ Ibid., 200.

⁷³⁵ Ibid., 246.

⁷³⁶ Ibid., 246.

⁷³⁷ Ibid., 277.

⁷³⁸ Ibid., 280.

targeted at the own counterdiscourse or subcultural discourse. While Coulter's rhetoric represents an, for the Discovery institute certainly not unfavorable, escalation of the science discourse, Coulter's stereotypes, labels, and overall discursive strategies are certainly not unrepresentative for the discourse of the evangelical subculture, which is full of discourse fragments and broader strands lamenting the "war against God"⁷³⁹ or "Godless evolution."⁷⁴⁰ Finally, her insistence of the inevitable connection between atheism and evolution places her admittedly exaggerated attack on Darwinism firmly into a long line of historic predecessors, as this is an age-old argument which has been made since the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*.

4.3.3.2. "His Noodly Appendage": Progressive Parodies

With millions, if not thousands, of devout worshippers, the Church of the FSM is widely considered a legitimate religion, even by its opponents - mostly fundamentalist Christians, who have accepted that our God has larger balls than theirs.

—Bobby Henderson, prophet of the *Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster*⁷⁴¹

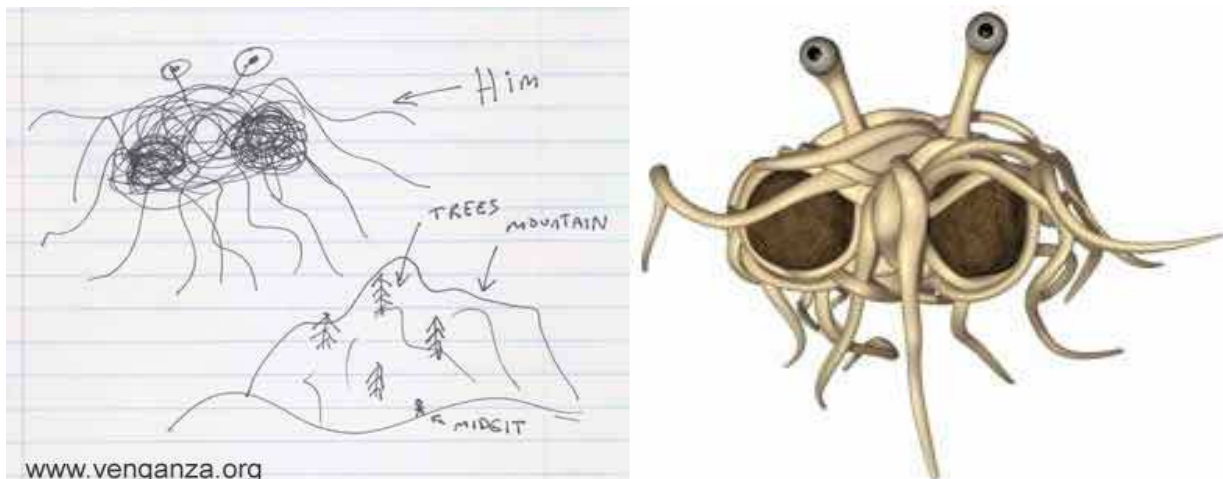


Fig. 4. Both images are taken from the official website of the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster: <http://www.venganza.org/materials/wallpapers>. The image on the left shows the original drawing Henderson that along with his letter to the Kansas School Board.

Compared to the evangelical subculture, a distinct secular or progressive subculture is hard to pinpoint. Groups like the "Council for Secular Humanism" or "American Atheists" are not representative of the secular segment of American society, of which avowed atheists only comprise a small minority anyway. Furthermore, progressive and secular groups do not need to set up fringe media institutions or their own distinct progressive pop culture to have their viewpoints and opinions confirmed, as the mass media often reports from a decidedly secular point of view; talk of a broad "anti-secular" or "anti-progressive" bias of the mass media is non-existent. They do not have their own exclusive progressive university system, their own progressive school system, or their own progres-

⁷³⁹ Frank, 207.

⁷⁴⁰ Pat Buchanan, quoted in: Michael D. Lemonick, "Dumping on Darwin: Pat Buchanan's attacks on the teaching of "Godless evolution" tap a rich vein of unscientific thought," *CNN.com*, <http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1996/analysis/time/9603/18/darwin.shtml>.

⁷⁴¹ Bobby Henderson, "Open Letter to Kansas School Board," <http://www.venganza.org/about/open-letter/>.

sive megachurches. That is not to say that a specifically progressive media culture for example does not exist. Magazines like the *The Nation* or *Mother Jones* certainly fit that description. There are also for example specific dating sites for progressives and myriad well-organized groups which label themselves as “progressive” and which have positioned themselves at the other end of the ideological and cultural spectrum in the context of the culture wars, explicitly in opposition to evangelical and Christian fundamentalist groups. Yet, a perceived progressive/secular subculture remains rather blurry. Polarized progressive groups doubtlessly exist and flourish – especially considering that secularists, “America’s unchurched,” according to Hunter the key constituency of the progressive side in the culture wars, are the fastest growing group in the religious context,⁷⁴² – but their lines of demarcation from the mainstream culture are not as distinct and thus more subtle as those of the evangelical subculture. While evangelical groups demarcate themselves from American mainstream culture, which is constantly brandished as being immoral and anti-Christian, progressive groups more or less actively distinguish themselves from their “evangelical other.”

Intelligent Design was of course widely-debated in progressive circles. One striking and common feature of their reaction to ID was the proliferation and abundance of parodies and satirical responses: from *The Onion* reporting from the Dover trial that a monkey “called as witness fails to identify anyone in the courtroom as his descendant”⁷⁴³ to the theory of “Intelligent Falling”⁷⁴⁴ stating that objects fall down to the earth because an “Intelligent Faller” makes them fall to the “reDiscovery Institute” promoting its “archaic religious dogma elegantly dressed in html code and modern scientific terminology.”⁷⁴⁵ This prompted the *New York Times* to conclude that “guerilla forces are joining the fray, with an unorthodox weapon: laughter.”⁷⁴⁶ The biggest story, however, which made nationwide headlines as a parody of Intelligent Design was conceived by self-proclaimed prophet Bobby Henderson, a then 25-year-old with a degree in physics. His “Pastafarian religion” unequivocally names the intelligent designer of the universe and of human life: The Flying Spaghetti Monster (FSM), a deity consisting of noodles and meatballs which looks remotely like a human brain.⁷⁴⁷ The story caught on amazingly quick and transformed the FSM into an astounding and persistent global internet phenomenon with a quickly rising number of self-avowed “Pastafarians” ending their prayers to “His Noodly Apendage” with a fervent “Ramen.”⁷⁴⁸ By August 2006, the website had received more than 350 million page hits after Random House had already published *The Gospel of the Flying Spaghetti Monster* in March 2006.

Unlike the *New York Times* states, humor and laughter in the form of parody and satire or mimesis and mimicry are certainly not unorthodox, but rather familiar weapons and thus a con-

⁷⁴² Cf. Ariela Keysar, Egon Mayer, and Barry A. Kosmin, “No Religion: A profile of America’s unchurched,” *Public Perspective* January/February 2003, 40-44.

⁷⁴³ “Intelligent Design Trial,” *The Onion* 5 Oct. 2005, <http://www.theonion.com/content/node/41260>.

⁷⁴⁴ Cf. “Intelligent Falling,” *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligent_falling.

⁷⁴⁵ reDiscovery Institute, “Mission of the reDiscovery Institute,” <http://www.re-discovery.org/>.

⁷⁴⁶ Cf. Cornelia Dean, “Helping Out Darwin’s Cause With a Little Pointed Humor,” *New York Times* 27 December 2005. In her article, Dean also describes additional instances of humoristic responses to ID.

⁷⁴⁷ Cf. Sarah Boxer, “But Is There Intelligent Spaghetti?” *New York Times* 29 August 2005.

⁷⁴⁸ Cf. Boxer.

stant characteristic of discourses about power. With regard to the “wild publics” and the contested spaces of the contemporary public sphere in Western societies, Gardiner stated that existing social hierarchies are

...often questioned and subverted through carnivalesque strategies of remarkable variety and invention, including the use of parodic and satirical language, grotesque humor, and symbolic degradations and inversion.⁷⁴⁹

The notion of “the carnivalesque” was formulated by Bakhtin in a study about sixteenth century novelist Francois Rabelais in which he explores the possibilities of identity-construction and resistance through the use of carnivalistic cultures. He infers that the aspiration of “‘the carnivalesque’ is to uncover, undermine – even destroy, the hegemony of any ideology that seeks to have the final word about the world” by “projecting an alternate conceptualization of reality.”⁷⁵⁰ Once again, the role of the underdog in this discourse fragment remains ambivalent. The FSM got favorable coverage in a number of major newspapers and was widely applauded within the science community. Yet, given the prevalence of religious belief in the United States and the fact that evangelicals Protestants form the largest religious group in the US, Henderson’s parody certainly challenges existing social hierarchies through its mockery of religious beliefs and doctrine and thus fits Bakhtin’s description.

At the level of discourse, the FSM is a classical example for mimicry and mimesis as Henderson mimics the rhetoric of the IDM and hijacks its discursive strategies. In November 2005, Henderson sent a letter to the Kansas School Board, which had just included Intelligent Design in the state’s science curriculum, posing in unison as the prophet of the Church of the FSM and as a concerned citizen who feared “that students will only hear one theory of Intelligent Design.”⁷⁵¹ In the name of his fellow Pastafarians, Henderson goes on the demand that their theory, “Flying Spaghetti Monsterism, be taught alongside the two other theories”:

We have evidence that a Flying Spaghetti Monster created the universe. None of us, of course, were around to see it, but we have written accounts of it. We have several lengthy volumes explaining all details of His power. Also, you may be surprised to hear that there are over 10 million of us, and growing. We tend to be very secretive, as many people claim our beliefs are not substantiated by observable evidence. What these people don’t understand is that He built the world to make us think the earth is older than it really is.⁷⁵²

He concludes his letter with a model on how his theory should be taught alongside the others: “One third time for Intelligent Design, one third time for Flying Spaghetti Monsterism, and one third time for logical conjecture based on overwhelming observable evidence.”⁷⁵³ Through this use of mimesis, the FSM mocks the perceived religious narrative of the IDM and more broadly evangelical Christianity, which supports the idea of the intelligent designer. By using this form of

⁷⁴⁹ Gardiner, 39.

⁷⁵⁰ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his world* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984) 9.

⁷⁵¹ Henderson.

⁷⁵² Henderson.

⁷⁵³ Henderson.

subversive humor, the grotesque and carnivalesque monster is elevated to the level of the intelligent designer, or alternatively, the intelligent designer, who is unambiguously defined as the Christian God in the popular perception of the evangelical subculture, is lowered down to the level of the FSM. In a study on the subversive function of religious parody on the basis of the FSM, Van Horn and Johnston conclude that “Flying Spaghetti Monsterism” exemplifies the “unmasking function of humor and its challenge to dogmatic authority.”⁷⁵⁴ Furthermore, “by subverting one form of narrative,”⁷⁵⁵ the corresponding other one is elevated and proved true. Thus, while he doesn’t even mention evolution in his letter to the board, Henderson alludes to it as the “logical conjecture based on overwhelming observable evidence.”⁷⁵⁶ The mimetic nature and the double-voicedness of the discourse on FSM therefore to some degree camouflage the intentions and the ideological positions of the actors, though they are not hard to decipher. Once the parodic character of the Flying Spaghetti Monster has been realized, the ongoing discourse creates difference not through discursively distinguishing the self from the other but rather by mimetically imitating the other – and tells the familiar narrative already known from the science and the mass media discourse. The ironic inversion of the story of the FSM implies once again the dogmatic and fundamentalist character of the IDM and its proponents and their ridiculous- and backwardness. The FSM discourse has taken the discursive strategies to another level, creating a no less stark “us versus them” dichotomy in a far subtler way. The blog, the comment section, and the hate-mail section on www.venganza.org, the homepage of the Pastafarian religion, illustrate how perfectly well the discourse on the FSM reproduces the fault lines, the arguments, and the discursive strategies already observed in the other discourse planes. Thus, though it is “only” a humoristic parody, the FSM story might deepen the rift between proponents and opponents of Intelligent Design, as many Christians were deeply offended by the parody.⁷⁵⁷ Kathy Martin, a member of the Kansas School Board, encapsulated this sentiment in her very short and impersonal reply to Henderson’s letter: “It is a serious offense to mock God.”⁷⁵⁸

4.3.4. Conclusion: “Intelligent Me, Unintelligent You”

All truth passes through three stages: First it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.
—Arthur Schoppenhauer⁷⁵⁹

Philip Johnson, described by his fellow colleagues at the Discovery Institute as the “prophet” of Intelligent Design, accurately prophesized that “[v]ictory in the creation-evolution debate therefore be-

⁷⁵⁴ Gavin Van Horn and Lucas Johnston, “Evolutionary Controversy and a Side of Pasta: The Flying Spaghetti Monster and the Subversive Function of Religious Parody,” *Golem: Journal on Religion and Monsters* Vol. 2, Issue 1 (2007), <http://www.golemjournal.org/van%20horn%20spaghetti%20monsters.pdf>.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁶ Henderson.

⁷⁵⁷ Cf. Dan Vergano, “‘Spaghetti Monster’ is noodling around with faith,” *USA Today* 26 March 2006, http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/2006-03-26-spaghetti-monster_x.htm.

⁷⁵⁸ “Kansas School Board Responses to the Open Letter,” *Venganza.org*, <http://www.venganza.org/about/open-letter/responses>.

⁷⁵⁹ The Quotations Page, <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/25832.html>.

longs to the party with the cultural authority to establish the ground rules that govern the discourse.”⁷⁶⁰ While the one side demands to “Teach the controversy,” the other replies “There is no controversy.” And while both sides purport to be the champions of true science, they both focus mainly on cultural or religious arguments: the science aspect receives little attention as the science community and its allies insist that ID is religious, that evolution is a scientific fact, and that a scientific controversy is thus non-existent; the IDM and its allies remain relatively quiet on science because they do not seem to have a lot of scientific proof at their disposal.

The ideological positions of the two sides involved in the discourse on evolution and ID have already been brought up in chapter three and in the historical introduction to this chapter: Though the IDM officially claims to be agnostic, both the internal “Wedge” document as well as the comprehensive decision by Judge Jones in the Dover case, coupled with the scientific shortcomings of ID, leave hardly any other choice than to interpret ID as a religiously motivated theory or rather concept, which is certainly interesting from a philosophical perspective. Trying to break into the science discourse, ID inevitably clashes with the broader science community, which aims at upholding its position of dominance. Consequently, the ID controversy fits the classical scenario of cultural struggle: ID represents the constant threat or, using Berger’s classification, a “lurking irreality” to the theory of evolution. The counterhegemonic discourse advanced by the IDM challenges the status quo upheld by the science community and offers an alternative system of meaning, another worldview, aiming to generate a new consensus.⁷⁶¹ The science community on the other hand wants to defend this status quo and their hold on power in defining how evolution respectively creation occurred and aims to maintain the cultural and scientific hegemony they enjoy in specific segments of the society. While the IDM tries to protect a worldview with an omnipotent deity at the center and thus is part of the “orthodox” forces, the science community is firmly entrenched as a centerpiece of the “progressive” camp. Hence, the cultural and ideological divide eminent in Hunter’s model also pervades the different planes of the Intelligent Design discourse as the different groups and actors have gathered around the two poles of science and religion, to which they show strong and lasting allegiances.

Consequently, the rhetoric and the discursive strategies characteristic of the different discourse planes as well as for the competing groups are very similar. With the controversy being firmly embedded in both the culture wars frame and the frame of warfare between science and religion, the discourse follows a cultural narrative, which is of course being told differently on both sides of the divide. Comparing the contemporary discourse in evolution and ID/creationism with its historic predecessors, one can begin to believe that evolution is indeed just a fairy tale. The discursive strategies, the labels and stereotypes and the ideological positions have not evolved since Charles Hodge declared Darwinism to be atheism in 1874. With the exception of a few new monikers like Coulter’s “Darwiniacs,” the “Neo-“ as a prefix to “-Darwinism” and the rather refreshing account of the Flying Spaghetti Monster, the voices of Mencken, Bryan and Darrow and their ridicule, labels,

⁷⁶⁰ Quoted in: Pennock, 188.

⁷⁶¹ Cf. Berger, 24.

and stereotypes still resonate. Hence, the discourse consists of a structure of several interrelated binary oppositions. In this “binary machine,” every pair invokes several other oppositions and frames: the pair “evolution/ID” leads to “science/religion” or “fact/belief,” which then could lead to “scientific/unscientific” and “rational/irrational.” From there, it’s not a long way to “intelligent me/unintelligent you,” which seems to be a preferred binary opposition in the ID discourse. The binary oppositions are always associated with a set of corresponding frames. Similar to the attempts by creation scientists in the 1960s and 1970s, the IDM has tried to reframe the debate by unsuccessfully breaking into the discourse of science and thus trying to create a “Science vs. Science” frame, which is a necessity for the IDM in order to have any chance of being taught in high school biology classes. Yet, frames as historic cognitive structures embedded in the collective memory of a given society are very stable. The most powerful and persisting frame is certainly the one invoked through any mentioning of the name “Scopes.” Yet, as we have seen, even the frame “monkey” successfully invokes specific stereotypes. Consequently, both sides have their own historically grown stereotypes to which they resort in order to categorize events and discourse fragments. The well-established discursive structure then renders real dialogue almost impossible, especially with regard to the lack of reasoning based on scientific arguments. The plan of the IDM to discursively attack the established definition of science and thus eventually overthrow the dominance of scientific knowledge in Western societies, which by definition excludes the supernatural and therefore any intelligent designer, must be seen as a futile attempt, similar to the attempt of an evolutionary biologist trying not to be stereotyped “atheist” by the fundamentalist Christian subculture.

The analysis has also shown that the different discourse strands and planes are all interconnected: they interact and overlap in a reciprocal relationship as they all share the distinction of being spaces for the construction and reproduction of social reality, power, and identity. On the “progressive” side, the science community, the mass media, and also the narrative of the FSM form a conglomerate which establishes a stable “regime of truth” and protects and defends the corresponding definition of science, the dominant position of scientific knowledge, and ultimately the corresponding worldview. They also, to revert to the military lingo often inherent in the culture wars, join forces to “capture the modes of representation” by stereotyping, labeling, and in the process ridiculing and mocking the IDM and evangelical groups and fundamentalist Christians. Using the same discursive strategies, the IDM and the evangelical subculture on the other hand have opened up a counterdiscourse, which has successfully put Intelligent Design on the national agenda and onto the broader societal public sphere, where a majority of Americans supports the teaching of ID in public schools.

From a contemporary perspective, the discourse on ID perfectly fits the pattern of the culture wars, because the conflict is a struggle for power between two different worldviews. From a historical perspective, the heated rhetoric of this discourse is just the latest materialization in an ongoing war of position for cultural hegemony. And this war has neither brought forth a clear winner nor a univocal underdog so far, with ID/creationism being popular in public opinion polls. The current situation can thus probably be best described as a cultural standoff. Hence, although they constantly set out to

devalue the other, to demarcate the self from the other, to win the battle for the power to define the other, they do not really try to persuade the other, because they seem to know that this would be almost impossible. However, both sides definitely vie to win over the broader public.

5. Conclusion: The Culture Wars Revisited... Again

I feel most deeply that the whole subject is too profound for the human intellect.

—Charles Darwin, “Letter to Asa Gray” (1860)⁷⁶²

But in a world where questions of cultural as well as personal identity seem so often locked in destructive embrace with issues of cultural difference, where people not only seem to prefer their own values to the values of others but appear to be able to maintain their own values too often only at the expense of disparaging and frequently demonizing the values of others, it is actually possible to imagine that the forms of life that we traditionally encompass within the structure of “self” and “other” can any longer have a constructive impact on one another?

—Giles Gunn, “Human Solidarity and the Problem of Otherness”⁷⁶³

More than 15 years after the publication of *Culture Wars*, the “struggle to define America” is still in full swing. Although the majority of Americans are non-combatants in the various cultural and social skirmishes and although Hunter’s thesis is still being debated, his culture wars model is a valid and fitting description of and explanation for the current situation in the United States. The groups which Hunter had identified as the key segments of the polarized fringes, evangelicals and secularists, have also been the two fastest growing groups with regard to the culture war context.⁷⁶⁴ These groups, “locked in destructive embrace,”⁷⁶⁵ remain engaged in a battle for the power of defining the meaning of America, which simultaneously is a battle for their own identity, and continue dominate the public discourse.⁷⁶⁶ Not surprisingly, they played key roles in the controversy over ID and evolution, which has proven to be an exemplary paradigm of the culture wars. As Hunter had stated in *Culture Wars*:

As with all other expressions of cultural antagonism, this conflict is ‘about’ the uses of symbols, the uses of language, and the right to impose discrediting labels upon those who would dissent. It is ultimately a struggle over the right to define the way things are and the way things should be. It is, therefore, more of a struggle to determine who is stronger, which alliance has the institutional resources capable of sustaining a particular definition of reality against the wishes of those who would project an alternate view of the world.⁷⁶⁷

As shown in the case study, this scenario is a fitting description of the controversy over ID. In the United States, Darwin’s theory of evolution has been a symbolic site of a public battle about cultural and religious issues at least since the Scopes trial. Additionally, the contemporary struggle is also fought with the discursive strategies Hunter had described in *Culture Wars*: in identical language and with very similar discursive strategies, the respective ‘other’ is labeled as being extremist and accused of using misleading stereotypes; each side tries to portray itself as being part of some

⁷⁶² Quoted in: Larry A. Witham, *Where Darwin meets the Bible: Creationists and Evolutionists in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) 202.

⁷⁶³ Gunn, 81.

⁷⁶⁴ Cf. Keysar, Mayer, and Kosmin, 40-44.

⁷⁶⁵ Gunn, 81.

⁷⁶⁶ Cf. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 287.

⁷⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 158.

mainstream while maintaining that the ‘other’, being extremist, is far removed from that mainstream; each side uses extreme language to exaggerate the threat posed by the opponent; and so on.⁷⁶⁸ Additionally, in accordance with Hunter’s culture wars model, the discourse on ID and evolution has also proved that behind all the rhetorical red herrings, underneath the educational policy disputes, and beyond the conflicting definitions of science, there exist different and competing understandings about what is true, what is real, and what is good, about what constitutes truth, and about the sources of knowledge. The ID discourse, going back to Hunter’s description, therefore is about the power “of sustaining a particular definition of reality” respectively challenging a particular definition of reality. Hunter’s opinion that the culture war is a struggle between two fundamentally different worldviews, the “orthodox” and the “progressive,” can also be observed: on the one side a purely naturalistic worldview based on science, the epitome of modernity, progress, and secularity; on the other side a traditional worldview based on religion, whose adherents could be considered as members of a cultural defense movement, who struggle to cope with the implications modern but “godless” science has on their worldview.⁷⁶⁹ The Intelligent Design discourse thus also seems to support my thesis that the major root of the current occurrence of the culture wars lies in the reaction of traditional Christianity towards the challenge posed by modern science. Apart from the content of their concept, the Dover decision, *The Wedge* document, and numerous utterances in which they have invoked God as the intelligent designer and in which they have revealed themselves as adherents of a strict Christian worldview have proven that ID is a religiously inspired theory. However, on the other side of the divide, evolutionary biologists and others in the science community have proven to have a largely atheistic outlook on life, which have caused some, like Dawkins or Pinker, to take on rather anti-religious positions. However, the more radical on both sides have positioned themselves as vocal leaders. Having no common ground, the public discourse will thus most likely remain polarized. To paraphrase Salman Rushdie, for the opponents in the ID controversy to understand each other and to find some common ground for dialogue, both sides would have to “swallow a world.” In the end, both ID proponents and opponents thus can only talk past each other. In the context of the culture wars, Hunter believes in any case “that the most vocal advocates at either end of the cultural axis are not inclined toward working for a genuinely pluralistic resolution.”⁷⁷⁰ Hence, as the case study on ID has shown, the respective actors dedicate considerable part of their rhetoric to preaching and catering to sympathetic audiences and their own key constituencies. Furthermore, as observed by Hunter, moderate voices are rarely heard: Scientists like Francis Collins, a geneticist, who tried to reconcile science and faith in his book *The Language of God*, and neither atheist nor proponent of ID, was attacked by both the IDM and Dawkins. Although there is a large number of Christians who accept the theory of evolution as represented by Neo-Darwinism, they remain quiet and make no headlines.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid., 144f.

⁷⁶⁹ Cf. Bruce, 31f.

⁷⁷⁰ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 298.

Being an allegory for the culture wars, my findings on the discursive strategies of the players in the ID controversy can certainly be applied to other conflicts and other battlefields of the culture wars as they often show similar scenarios, especially with regard to the actors on the subcultural level. As shown in chapter two, discursive strategies in the context of cultural conflicts tend to be very similar as competing social groups naturally follow strategies of positive self-representation and negative other presentation.

5.1. Excursus: Culture War 2.0

A phenomenon which Hunter could not foresee when he published *Culture Wars* in 1992 – and which regrettably, due to a lack of space, is also not examined in detail in this paper – was the emergence of the internet as a new forum for public discourse, as an alternate public sphere in which different counter-publics form and formulate challenges and claims to power, as a sphere of publics in which various subpublics have recreated their own discursive habitats. The internet and more specifically the blogosphere are both detached from and interrelated with established institutions like the mass media. As a source of information, the cyberspace has stretched and even shattered the borders of time and space, transmitting news in the blink of an eye from user to user via blogs, newsgroups, or messageboards, creating virtual communities and “subverting the hieratic power”⁷⁷¹ of the established mass media outlets. Richard Powers, a novelist who writes about modern science and technology, thus stresses that the “public’s relationship to the media is more decentered than ever before”⁷⁷² and that “cyberspace has democratized political commentary and media criticism”⁷⁷³ as many activist bloggers and fringe cyberjournalists not only sometimes are the first to break news stories, but also are “engaged in what one might call ‘asymmetrical warfare’ with established media outlets,”⁷⁷⁴ which they denounce for their supposed bias and willful distortions, partisanship and hidden agenda. Yet, the internet has also helped to amplify the polarizing tendencies of the culture wars as it has become the new main battlefield – with seemingly even more petrified frontlines. In virtual communities of like-minded people and “ideological soulmates,”⁷⁷⁵ opinions tend to get reinforced instead of being scrutinized as critical discourse falls victim to what is known as the ‘echo chamber effect’ of the blogosphere.⁷⁷⁶ *New York Times* columnist John Tierney has thus observed that “as the media audiences segregate themselves ideologically, they become more extreme in their views – and more convinced than ever that they represent the sensible middle.”⁷⁷⁷ When culture warriors of all shades meet in cyberspace, their debates about issues such as abor-

⁷⁷¹ Richard Powers, *Sore Winners: American Idols, Patriotic Shoppers and Other Strange Species in Bush’s America* (New York: Anchor Books, 2005) 195.

⁷⁷² *Ibid.*, 194.

⁷⁷³ *Ibid.*, 195.

⁷⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁵ John Tierney, “Must We Talk?”, *New York Times*, 7 Nov. 2006.

⁷⁷⁶ The ‘echo chamber effect’ refers to the phenomenon in the blogosphere that opinions are constantly echoed back to the user, thus reinforcing the opinion and the corresponding truth associated with it, which in turn resonates with an underlying belief system. For more on that metaphor, cf.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Echo_chamber#As_a_metaphor.

⁷⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

tion, the Schiavo case or Intelligent Design too often degenerate into ‘flame wars’ marked by name-calling, the use of pejorative lexical labels, and stereotypes.⁷⁷⁸ Though it has immense democratic potential, the blogosphere has not become an idealized Habermasian public sphere of rational discourse. On the contrary, the build-up of in-group cohesion, the aggressive postures and muscle flexing of the culture warriors, and the overall strengthening of the culture wars have led Tierney to call the internet and more specifically the blogosphere “one giant version of the Colorado experiment.”⁷⁷⁹ Furthermore, blogs and internet magazines, compared to established mass media outlets, often do not even try to be objective. In many cases, they do not even bother to hide their partisanship behind a guise of objectivity. The blogosphere teems with blogs called “The Liberal Progressive,” “Atheist Revolution,” “Liberals Must Die,” “Red Guy in a Blue State,” “The Christian Soldier,” and countless others who are usually dedicated to bash ‘the other’ consciously implied in the respective names. Scrolling down the blogrolls of any of these sites will turn up links to myriad other blogs (which, judging only by the name, are not identifiable as dealing with the culture wars) which lead even deeper into the conservative, liberal, evangelical, or atheist cyberuniverse. More proof of what *Los Angeles Times* opinion web editor Tim Cavanaugh fittingly calls “Culture War 2.0”:⁷⁸⁰ the Conservapedia, a conservative Christian web-encyclopedia which “does not pretend to be neutral”⁷⁸¹ and which features one-sided and thus rather distorted views on typical culture war topics like evolution, abortion, or Democrats such as Al Gore; the CreationWiki (creationwiki.org), a site dedicated to attack evolution; the website www.whywontgodhealamputees.com which states that “[b]elief is nothing but a silly superstition”⁷⁸² and very obviously attempts to convert Christians to become atheists or at least agnostics; the “Blasphemy Challenge” on the video portal YouTube, initiated by documentary filmmaker Brian Flemming (*The God Who Wasn’t There*), an appeal to deny the existence of God in video proclamations which got more than 3,100 responses (05/23/2007), but which was swiftly countered – again initiated on YouTube by the fundamentalist webproject RaptureAlert.com – by the “Challenge Blasphemy” and “Praise the Lord” campaigns.⁷⁸³ Once again, it is the activists, not the moderates, who sing the binary-coded culture wars blues. The internet thus is a force of both unity and division, creating virtual communities by providing new and easy forms of communication, bringing different subgroups and subcultures together by collapsing

⁷⁷⁸ Cf. Powers, 34.

⁷⁷⁹ Tierney. The experiment he refers to was conducted in 2005 at the University of Colorado and proved that, while debating typical culture wars issues such as abortion, groups in which the various individual members had overlapping opinions tended to intensify their views toward the extremes, not towards more moderate middle of the road positions.

⁷⁸⁰ Tim Cavanaugh, “Culture War 2.0: America’s second longest war returns,” *Los Angeles Times* 14 Feb. 2007, http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/la-oew-cavanaugh14feb14_0,2652667.story?coll=la-promo-opinion.

⁷⁸¹ Conservapedia, “Conservapedia: Editor’s Guide,” http://www.conservapedia.com/Conservapedia:Editor%27s_guide. The Conservapedia, like the CreationWiki, has been a favorite target of what its founders naturally presume to be atheist and hostile internet users who have flooded the sites with senseless scoffing articles.

⁷⁸² <http://www.whywontgodhealamputees.com>.

⁷⁸³ Cf. Konrad Lischka, “US-Glaubenskrieg im Web: Sie verhöhnen Gott auf YouTube,” *Spiegel Online*, <http://www.spiegel.de/netzwelt/web/0,1518,480471,00.html>.

space (and time). But the internet also helps to deepen cultural rifts. The shift to the internet is another proof of the vitality of the culture wars, which partly negates the assertion of Wolfe and Fiorina who blame the talk about culture wars solely on polarized politicians, the elites, and the mass media. In cyberspace, the grassroots, detached from these institutions and groups, play an essential part in keeping the culture wars alive.

The discourse on Intelligent Design and evolution also largely took place in the cyberspace and blogosphere. As early as 1999, Pennock had already observed that the “internet is the new public square, and talk.origins is the corner of the square where many creationists first come to challenge evolutionists for their territory.”⁷⁸⁴ Forums like talkorigin.org and pandasthump.org are still main arenas for the discourse and both the IDM and the science community use blogs and other virtual tools of communication to get their viewpoints across. Additionally, the Flying Spaghetti Monster, whose success was solely based on the internet, proved the power of the cyberspace in creating symbols and stories which are, at least at first, completely detached from the dominant discourses of the mass media, but still are able to reach an audience of millions through the collapse of space and time inherent in the medium of the internet. The advent of the Web 2.0 has also heralded the phase of the “prosumer”: internet users have transformed themselves from passive users to active producers and blogs, forums, or video platforms such as *YouTube* have vastly enhanced the communicative scope of the internet. However, as the aforementioned examples have shown, the internet has also expanded the battlefield of the culture wars as well as increased the modes of contact between the warring camps.

5.2. Epilogue and Outlook: The Struggle to Define America Will Continue

The culture war is not fading away by any means. It is, at most, decentralizing.

—James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars*⁷⁸⁵

When I traveled to the United States in late 2006 to do research for this paper, I was wandering the streets of New York City in search of the culture wars. I was scanning newspapers, watching Fox News, surfing the internet, keeping my eyes open – and there were certainly traces of political polarization and cultural rifts: everywhere I looked, another magazine devoted a title story to one of the different battlefields. *TIME Magazine* titled in capital letters “GOD VS SCIENCE” (Nov. 13, 2006), *Harpers* December issue cover story was named “God Blessed America. How the Christian Right is Reinventing U.S. History,” *The Nation* debated whether Americans lived “In God’s Country” (Nov. 20, 2006) or not, and *The American Interest* asked “Dueling Parties: Is Polarization Destroying our Democracy?” and focused not only on politics and parties, but also cultural and religious disparities. Even the satirical *The Onion*, always keeping an eye on current cultural contradictions, ran the headline “Kansas Outlaws the Theory of Evolution.”

And then there were the midterm elections of November 2006, won by the Democrats with a

⁷⁸⁴ Pennock, 33.

⁷⁸⁵ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 297.

landslide on the back of independent voters, capturing both the Senate and the House of Representatives and prompting Linda Feldman to declare the comeback of the swing voter in the *Christian Science Monitor*.⁷⁸⁶ With the increasing political polarization and the reliance on the culture war thesis as an explanation of this phenomenon, the swing voter had been added to the list of endangered species, joining the ranks of black Republicans, the Dixiecrats, or any third-party adherents. At least since the heated atmosphere of and the chaotic events surrounding the 2000 presidential election, the nation has been envisaged as being politically split right in the middle, a 50-50 nation pitting Democrats against Republicans, red states against blue states, and, on a cultural scale, traditionalists respectively conservatives against progressivists and liberals. Comedian Stephen Colbert, who poses as a fake conservative, probably captured the feeling of the losing side in his show *The Colbert Report* on the night of the election, when he declared in his usual exaggerated portrayal of political events:

Tomorrow, you're all going to wake up in a brave new world, where the constitution gets trampled by an army of terrorist clones created in a stem-cell research lab run by homosexual doctors who sterilize their instruments over burning American flags, where tax-and-spend Democrats take all your hard-earned money and use it to buy electric cars for National Public Radio and teach evolution to illegal immigrants. And everybody's high!⁷⁸⁷

Yet, this comment does not sound so outrageous and completely out-of-touch with the sentiment of American voters when one took a look at the ramblings of the blogosphere and tuned in to talk radio after the midterm election: scornful gloating on the one side, extreme doom-mongering on the other side. Consequently, claims with regard to a permanent return of the swing voter might be a bit premature. Though swing voters seemingly stepped back into the spotlight in 2006, the majority of voters still cast their ballot along now almost taken-for-granted political and cultural lines. Some media pundits and political activists claimed that key constituencies like the Christian Right have turned away from the Republicans, but the base supporters turned out in droves for their side again, just as in the presidential elections of 2000 and 2004.⁷⁸⁸ Thus, as Feldman rightly points out in her analysis of the 2006 midterm elections: "It may be a fleeting moment, and it does not spell the end of polarization."⁷⁸⁹

Yet, while writing these lines in July 2007, the culture wars really seem to have tamed down a bit. Even the "Google Alerts" on Intelligent Design are arriving with less frequency in my virtual mailbox. And yet again, as various scholars have suggested, the culture wars move like the tides. Hence, just like Hunter predicted in 1992, the culture wars likely will continue unabated. The "Culture Wars industry" persistently pours out books which cater to both sides of the divide and, as seen in New York in 2006, newspapers and political magazines, *Fox News* and talk radio are not letting go of the topic. Furthermore, the internet has provided the centrifugal forces with a new battlefield and might thus be the factor proving Hunter's estimation that the culture

⁷⁸⁶ Cf. Feldmann.

⁷⁸⁷ Stephen Colbert, *The Colbert Report*, 7 Nov. 2006, <http://www.colbertnation.com/?p=395>.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid. Cf. also "5 Myths about the Midterm Election," *TIME Magazine*, 16 Nov. 2006.

⁷⁸⁹ Feldmann.

wars will be decentralizing at best. The fringes will remain polarized as long as their worldviews remain incompatible – and there is no resolution, no solution in sight. They will thus inevitably square off in a battle for power, always waiting for new trigger issues and new symbols around which they can gather. And it wouldn't be surprising if the next major chapter in the culture wars will again involve Intelligent Design and evolution.

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Appendix

Zusammenfassung:

In den Vereinigten Staaten tobt seit Jahren ein Kulturkampf, wenn es nach den Schlagzeilen in den Massemedien geht. Vor, während und nach dem Präsidentschaftswahlkampf 2004 wurde so das Bild einer zerrissenen, uneinigen Nation transportiert. Dieses Bild bestimmte die Presselandschaft jedoch schon in den vorangegangenen Wahlkämpfen. Zwar gab es auch diesmal wieder Stimmen und Leitartikel, die bestritten, dass sich die Vereinigten Staaten in einem Kulturkampf befänden, oder in Frage stellten, ob dieses Deutungsmuster richtig sei. Sie waren jedoch klar in der Minderheit, zumindest was die Medien und öffentliche Meinungsäußerungen im Allgemeinen betrafen. Denn auch im Internet tippten sich Blogger die Finger wund und gaben gleich Anleitungen, wie der Gegner im Kulturkampf am besten zu bekämpfen sei. Im populären Talk Radio tobten sich emotionalisierte Kulturkämpfer nach Herzenslust aus. Und auch deutsche und internationale Medien reproduzierten bereitwillig das Bild vom „Kulturkampf in Amerika“ (FAZ) oder vom „Krieg der Welten“ (Süddeutsche Zeitung). Dabei geht es immer wieder um die gleichen Streitfragen, die auf immer wiederkehrenden Schlachtfeldern ausgefochten werden. Abtreibung, Homosexualität, die Rolle von Religion im öffentlichen Leben werden in den Massenmedien, im politischen Diskurs, im Internet diskutiert. Mittendrin tobte vor allem im Jahr 2005 die Kontroverse um Intelligent Design, die im wissenschaftlichen, vor allem aber generell im gesellschaftlichen Diskurs sehr viel Beachtung fand und findet. In dieser Arbeit soll der Diskurs um Intelligent Design und die Evolutionstheorie genauer analysiert werden. Der Schwerpunkt wird dabei auf der Fragestellung liegen, wie in diesem neuerlichen Zusammenprall zwischen Religion und Wissenschaft Machtstrukturen und Herrschaftsansprüche austariert, gefestigt und herausgefordert werden. Denn meiner Ansicht nach ist die Debatte um Intelligent Design keine wissenschaftliche, sondern primär eine kulturelle und gesellschaftliche Debatte, in der es um die kulturelle Dominanz geht, um die Durchsetzung eigener Definitionen von Wissenschaft, die sich aus unterschiedlichen Quellen speisen, einer wissenschaftlichen und naturalistischen, und einer religiösen. Zur Untersuchung des Diskurses ist die kritische Diskursanalyse eine geeignete Methodik. Sie hat sich in den letzten Jahren zu einem interdisziplinären Forschungsansatz entwickelt, welcher Methoden der Linguistik mit Impulsen und Konzepten aus der Soziologie oder der Medienwissenschaft miteinander verknüpft. Die kritische Diskursanalyse, inspiriert durch Schriften von Foucault, Habermas und Gramsci, hat sich zum Ziel gesetzt, diskursiv konstruierte Phänomene wie z. B. Rassismus und kulturelle Konflikte zu analysieren. Im Mittelpunkt der kritischen Diskursanalyse stehen Fragen nach der diskursiven Konstruktion von Realität sowie der diskursiven Aufrechterhaltung und Vermittlung von Machtstrukturen. Daher konzentriert sich eine kritische Diskursanalyse nicht nur auf Sprache, sondern vor allem auf das Regelsystem, welches den Diskurs generiert, und auf die diskursiven Strategien der verschiedenen, involvierten Akteure und Gruppen. Die kritische Diskursanalyse setzt zusätzlich eine tiefgehenden Analyse des Kontexts, in

dem der Diskurs über ein bestimmtes Thema stattfindet, voraus. In vielen Ansätzen wird dabei sowohl der gegenwärtige als auch der historische Kontext eingehend bewertet, da sich nur so fundierte Schlüsse über die Betrachtungsgegenstände ziehen lassen. Zusätzlich hat sich die kritische Diskursanalyse zum Ziel gesetzt, die ideologischen Positionen der Akteure und Gruppen, die in die diskursive Auseinandersetzung verwickelt sind, zu entschlüsseln. Macht/Herrschaft, Wissen, Ideologie und deren Zusammenspiel in einem spezifischen Diskurs sind folglich die Hauptbetrachtungspunkte der kritischen Diskursanalyse. *Frame Analysis* ist ein weiteres interdisziplinäres Konzept für die Untersuchung von Diskursen. *Frames* sind kognitive Strukturen, welche durch spezielle Metaphern oder Schlüsselwörter aktiviert werden und so bestimmte Interpretationen von Ereignissen auslösen. Die Frame Analysis geht davon aus, dass konkurrierende Gruppen versuchen, den Diskurs nach ihren jeweiligen Vorstellungen zu „framen,“ um so bestimmte Reaktionen innerhalb der Bevölkerung hervorzurufen und so die weitere Marschrichtung des Diskurs vorherzubestimmen. Das Konzept des ‚Public Sphere‘ von Jürgen Habermas ist ein weiteres Mittel, um die Diskussion um Intelligent Design und Evolution zu dechiffrieren. Habermas platzierte seinen bürgerlichen „öffentlichen Raum“ im England, Frankreich und Deutschland des späten 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert und skizzierte einen Ort, an dem freie und gleiche Bürger Streitpunkte und Probleme rational diskutierten, der aber schließlich durch den Diskurs der Massenmedien, die den Bürger zu einem passiven Konsumenten degradieren, an die Seite gedrängt wurde. Neuere Konzeptionen gehen jedoch eher von einer Vielzahl von ‚public spheres‘ aus und kritisieren Habermas Ansicht des rationalen, vorurteilsfreien Diskurs als die einzig wünschenswerte Art öffentlicher Debatte. Zuguterletzt bilden verschiedene Theorien, zusammengefasst unter dem Oberbegriff ‚Self/Other‘, eine Basis für die Analyse der diskursiven Konstruktion von *otherness* und *difference*. Ausgehend von der Annahme, das „das Andere“ bzw. „die Anderen“ in dem menschlichen Deutungsmuster von binären Gegensätzen zur Bestimmung des „Ichs“ konstitutiv ist, zeigen Konzepte wie stereotyping oder scapegoating auf, wie die Kohärenz und der Zusammenhalt der eigenen Gruppe auf Kosten „des Anderen“, welches linguistisch negativ bedacht wird, gestärkt werden kann. Stereotype funktionieren dabei als Mittel sozialer Kontrolle und Herrschaft, indem sie Gruppen und Individuen in bestimmte negative Kategorien hineindenken, die mit Spott und Verhöhnung bedacht werden und so aus der gesellschaftlichen Mitte ausgeschlossen werden sollen.

Vor einer eingehenden Analyse des Diskurses um Intelligent Design ist jedoch die Klärung der Frage, ob sich die USA in einem veritablen Kulturkampf befinden, notwendig, da dieses Modell den gegenwärtigen Kontext darstellt. Die These vom amerikanischen Kulturkampf betrat Anfang der neunziger Jahre mit dem Buch *Culture Wars: The Struggle to define America* des Soziologen James Davison Hunter die Bildfläche. Hunter vertritt in diesem Buch die These, dass sich in den USA zwei Gruppierungen, *the orthodox* and *the progressives*, diametral gegenüberstehen. Nach Hunter ist der Konflikt dieser Gruppen historisch gewachsen, und speist sich aus grundsätzlich verschiedenen Weltanschauungen: die Orthodoxen haben ein traditionelles, christliches Weltbild, wohingegen die Progressiven einem modernen, säkularen Weltbild anhängen. Diese Gruppen treffen im Konflikt über

die bereits erwähnten Themen aufeinander, und versuchen, nahezu durchgehend mit diskursiven Mitteln, ihre Weltansicht zu verankern, um so kulturelle Dominanz auszuüben. Hierbei sind politische Konfliktlinien nur oberflächlich der Auslöser für viele Konflikte. Hunter zeigt auf, dass sich kulturelle Konfliktlinien, die viel tiefer und viel dauerhafter sind, in politischen Frontverläufen manifestiert haben. Republikaner/Konservative und Demokraten/Liberale stehen sich demnach nicht ursächlich aufgrund ihrer politischen Orientierung und Parteizugehörigkeit gegenüber, sondern weil sich innerhalb der Parteien dieselben Gruppierungen und Aktivisten formiert haben, die laut Hunter die Bodentruppen und die überzeugtesten Kulturkämpfer darstellen: die Orthodoxen, hauptsächlich evangelikale und andere konservative Christen auf der einen Seite, auf der anderen die Progressiven, sehr säkulare Gruppen und auch Atheisten. Diese Gruppen überziehen einander nun mit Stereotypen, zeichnen „den Anderen“ jeweils im schlechtmöglichsten Licht, brandmarken einander als extremistisch, versuchen „den Anderen“ aus der Mitte der Gesellschaft hinauszukatapultieren.

Natürlich ist die Kulturkampf-Theorie ein gern benutztes, weil einfaches Deutungsmuster. Das Bild ist jedoch oftmals zum Klischee verkommen, das den unterschiedlichsten Debatten, Konflikten und Sachverhalten oft reflexartig aufgepappt wird. Konsequenterweise würde Hunters Modell denn auch innerhalb der akademischen Welt attackiert. Seine Kritiker hielten ihm vor, dass die Realität oft komplexer sei, vor allem was die meist allzu simple Einteilung der Akteure in Liberale und Konservative, in Linke und Rechte, in Fundamentalisten und Atheisten oder die als gegeben angesehene Spaltung in ein *Red America* und ein *Blue America* betrifft. Zudem wird von vielen Kritikern der Kulturkampf-These immer wieder vorgebracht, dass die angebliche Polarisierung des Landes für die absolute Mehrheit der Amerikaner keine Relevanz besitzt. Die Polarisierung der Vereinigten Staaten wird in dieser Interpretation von extremen Gruppen der kulturellen bzw. politischen Rechten und evangelikalen Christen auf der einen Seite sowie den äquivalenten Gruppen – säkulare, progressive, linke Gruppierungen – auf der anderen Seite vorangetrieben. Genau dies hat Hunter jedoch auch nie bestritten. Er bleibt, unterstützt von Mitstreitern im akademischen Diskurs, aber bei seiner Ansicht, dass aufgrund der Tiefe der kulturellen Spaltung die Bezeichnung Kulturkampf berechtigt sei. Angesichts der zum Teil hassefüllten Rhetorik und der aufgeladenen Atmosphäre der militanten, sich diametral gegenüberstehenden Gruppen, die den Diskurs beherrschen, ist dies meiner Meinung nach berechtigt. Diese Gruppen haben in den letzten Jahren vor allem das Internet als neues Schlachtfeld entdeckt. Hunters Modell ist so zum paradigmatischen Interpretationsmuster geworden, welches vom größten Teil der Medien kolportiert wird und von der Öffentlichkeit akzeptiert bzw. nicht in Frage gestellt wird.

Die Kontroverse um Intelligent Design war in den letzten Jahren eines der zentralen, wenn nicht das Zentrale Thema, welches mit den amerikanischen Kulturkämpfen assoziiert wird. Im Dezember 2004 klagten elf Eltern in Dover, Pennsylvania, gegen den lokalen Schulausschuss, der im dortigen Schulbezirk das Lehren von Intelligent Design als Alternative zur Evolutionstheorie angeordnet hatte. Die Eltern argumentierten, dass Intelligent Design eine religiöse Theorie sei und daher, aufgrund der verfassungsmäßigen Trennung von Staat und Kirche, nicht in öffentlichen Schulen gelehrt wer-

den dürfe. Damit war ein weiteres Kapitel im Kulturkampf eröffnet. Es verging kaum ein Tag, an dem nicht eine der großen Zeitungen einen Beitrag über die Kontroverse brachte. Das Thema wurde zu einem der prägenden Diskurse des Jahres 2005. Ein anfangs lokaler Konflikt verbreitete sich wie ein Buschfeuer. Auch in anderen Staaten gab es Versuche, die äußerst umstrittene Theorie auf den Lehrplan zu setzen. Die Aufregung um Intelligent Design wird verständlich, wenn man einen genaueren Blick auf den Diskurs wirft. Denn der Diskurs über Intelligent Design ist vor allem ein kultureller Diskurs, kein primär wissenschaftlicher, ein Diskurs, in dem das Selbstverständnis der amerikanischen Nation verhandelt wird. Es geht darum, welches Weltbild sich durchsetzen wird, welches in den öffentlichen Schulen gelehrt wird, es geht um absolute, finale Wahrheiten. Die Kontroverse wurde, als Teil des Kulturkampfes, zum Showdown zwischen Glaube und Vernunft hochstilisiert. Damit wurde der von vielen beteiligten Akteuren wahrgenommene, ja gar beschriebene, Konflikt zwischen Religion und Wissenschaft wieder einmal befeuert. Denn eigentlich ist der Konflikt nichts wirklich Neues: Seitdem die Evolutionstheorie in Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* die Weltbühne betrat, wird sie von der christlichen Rechten attackiert. Aus ihrer Sicht ist der Darwinismus ein Symbol für den Versuch säkularer Kräfte, Religion bzw. das Christentum aus ihrer modernen Welt zu verbannen. So nahmen sie die Evolutionslehre immer wieder unter Beschuss. Vom Scopes Trial, dem Affenprozess im Jahre 1925, der zum leitenden Interpretationsmuster wurde und das Bild vom Kampf zwischen Religion und Wissenschaft verfestigte, bis hin zum Erstarken des Kreationismus in den achtziger Jahren. Der historische Kontext stellt daher einen guten Referenzpunkt für die Analyse des gegenwärtigen Diskurses.

Das erste untersuchte *discourse plane*, der wissenschaftliche Diskurs, oder besser der Diskurs der Wissenschaftler, wird hauptsächlich nicht mit wissenschaftlichen, sondern mit kulturellen Argumenten geführt. Mit Bezugnahme auf den historischen Kontext halten Kritiker Intelligent Design dementsprechend nur für einen weiteren Versuch, die Evolutionslehre zu torpedieren, mit einer religiös motivierten, an den Kreationismus angelehnten Theorie, die allenfalls wissenschaftlich verpackt ist. Die Verfechter des Intelligent Design hingegen sprechen von sprechen von einer der Evolutionslehre wenn schon nicht überlegenen, dann wenigstens gleichwertigen wissenschaftlichen Theorie, die dementsprechend ihren Platz im Biologieunterricht bekommen sollte. Es gibt ihrer Ansicht nach genügend Beweise für die Existenz eines intelligenten Designers, der das Leben auf der Erde in einem schöpferischen Akt hervorgebracht habe. Und mit ihrer Ansicht scheinen sie Umfragen zu Folge im gesellschaftlichen Mainstream zu liegen. Dabei versuchen beide Seiten, die Deutungshoheit über Begriffe wie Wissenschaft und Theorie zu bekommen bzw. zu behalten. Weiterhin wird versucht, die gegnerische Seite als extremistisch und militant zu porträtieren, um sich so selbst als kultureller Insider zu definieren, der gegen kulturelle Outsider ankämpft.

Die Untersuchung des zweiten *discourse planes*, der Massenmedien, zeigt auf, dass die Massenmedien ein sehr einseitiges Bild des Diskurses transportieren – ob dies richtig und gerechtfertigt ist, ist jedoch nicht Teil meiner Untersuchung. Die Massenmedien zeichnen Intelligent Design klar als einen religiös motivierten Versuch evangelikaler Kreise und Gruppen, ein religiöses Weltbild im

Schulunterricht als auch in den Köpfen der breiteren Gesellschaft zu verankern. Der Diskurs in den Massenmedien fungierte somit primär als ein Vehikel für den Transport des herrschenden wissenschaftlichen Konsensus, der Intelligent Design nicht als eine wissenschaftliche Theorie akzeptiert. In den extremeren Formen wird Intelligent Design zusätzlich oftmals beißendem Spott ausgesetzt, was sich vor allem in den politischen Cartoons der großen Tageszeitungen und Magazine manifestierte. Der Diskurs der Massenmedien folgt in der Art der Berichterstattung einem historischen Vorbild: dem *Scopes Trial*, auch bekannt als Affenprozess, bei dem in den zwanziger Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts in ähnlicher Weise Wissenschaft und Religion, Rationalität und Glaube gegenüber gestellt wurden. Das Bild und das Erklärungsmuster, welches der *Scopes Trial* lieferte, wurde von den Massenmedien den folgenden Konflikten um die Evolutionslehre immer wieder reflexartig hinübergestülpt. Hier wird auch für Intelligent Design, obwohl wissenschaftlich verpackt, keinerlei Ausnahme gemacht.

Schlussendlich wird das Thema natürlich auch in vielen subkulturellen Diskursen ausdauernd, aber natürlich nicht immer kontrovers diskutiert. Als Beispiel des christlich-konservativen Diskurses fungiert das Buch *Godless: The Church of Liberalism* der Autorin Ann Coulter. Hier wird Evolutionstheorie auf polemischer und platter Weise begegnet. Zugleich bietet sich hier aber ein spiegelverkehrtes Bild: dem Spott ist nun der Neodarwinismus ausgesetzt, der als irrationale, quasireligiöse Ideologie dargestellt wird. Es sind nun die progressiven Gruppen und die Liberalen, die sie als gesellschaftliches Grundübel, als Verantwortliche für alle möglichen Missstände identifiziert, die als die wahren Feinde der Wissenschaft gebrandmarkt werden, da sie schließlich die Coulters Meinung nach wissenschaftlich fundierte Theorie vom Intelligent Design ablehnen und so ihrer eigenen „Religion“ in dogmatischer Weise anhängen. Auch hier finden sich, wie bereits im Diskurs der Massenmedien, die gleiche Argumentationsstrategien des wissenschaftlichen Diskurses wieder. Erweitert wird die Argumentation aber um den Punkt, dass die Evolutionstheorie und deren Verfechter, allen voran Evolutionswissenschaftler, gottlos seien und nur das Ziel verfolgen würden, Atheismus und die Ideologie vom *Secular Humanism* in den Schulen und konsequenterweise im Bewusstsein der amerikanischen Nation tief zu verankern, um so ihr eigenes Weltbild zu verteidigen und zu etablieren. Die progressiven Gruppen hingegen haben, ähnlich wie die Cartoons in den Massenmedien, vor allem mit Spott auf die Versuche reagiert, Intelligent Design als wissenschaftliche Alternative zur Evolutionslehre zu verkaufen. Hierbei gibt es einige Diskurse und Ansätze, die die Strategie und die Ideen hinter Intelligent Design in ironischer Weise zu verdrehen. So hat vor allem in der Blogosphäre das *Flying Spaghetti Monster* eine große Anhängerschaft. Von seinen „Anhängern“ wird gefordert, die „wissenschaftliche“ Theorie vom *Flying Spaghetti Monster* als Alternative zur Evolutionstheorie zu lehren, denn schließlich sei „His Noodly Appendage“ der intelligente Designer, der das Leben auf der Erde geschaffen habe und den Evolutionsprozess steuere. Eine andere Parodie auf ID ist das *Intelligent Falling*, die in ebenso pseudowissenschaftlicher Sprache erklärt, dass die Schwerkraft nicht naturalistisch zu verstehen sei, sondern dass Objekte von einer höheren Intelligenz zurück auf die Erde fallen und dort gehalten werden. Zuguterletzt gibt es eine weitere Parodie

mit dem wohl unvermeidlichen Namen *Unintelligent Design*, die besagt, dass das Leben auf Erden durch den Akt eines Schöpfers entstand. Jedoch ist dieser Schöpfer nicht der intelligente Designer des ID Konzeptes, sondern eben ein relativ unintelligenter Designer, der zahlreiche Fehler macht. So werden ausgestorbene Arten als Beweis dafür angeführt, dass der Designer ziemlich planlos agiert. Allen drei Parodien ist inne, dass sie sich der selben Argumentationsstrategien der Intelligent Design-Befürworter bedienen, um so deren Schwachpunkte offen legen und ebenso mit nicht überprüfbaren Hypothesen agieren. So wird die Wissenschaftlichkeit von ID ins Lächerliche gezogen. Gleichzeitig transportieren diese Ansätze natürlich unterschwellig dasselbe Bild, das auch in den Massenmedien und von Seiten der etablierten Wissenschaft gezeichnet wird: ID ist unwissenschaftlich, ein religiös motivierter Versuch, den christlichen Glauben als Autorität und als Machtstruktur wieder zu etablieren um gleichzeitig die Autorität der Naturwissenschaften zu unterminieren, die Welt zu erklären.

Der letzte diskursanalytische Untersuchungspunkt dieser Arbeit, der sich bereits im Fazit befindet, geht schließlich der Fragestellung nach, ob das Internet ein neuer ‚Public Sphere‘ im Habermaschen Sinne ist. Dabei wird festgestellt, dass das Internet im allgemeinen und die Blogosphere im besonderen eine ‚sphere of publics‘ darstellt, in welcher sich verschiedene Gruppen, abseits der Dominanz des dominanten Diskurses der Massenmedien, ihre eigenen, virtuellen Diskussionsräume erschaffen haben. In der Blogosphere haben die Massenmedien ihre Rolle als Agendasetter und unabdingbarer Übermittler und Erklärer von Nachrichten und Ereignissen verloren. Vielmehr gibt es zwischen der Blogosphere und den Massenmedien nun eine Wechselwirkung. Beide nehmen sowohl Anstöße aus der jeweils anderen Sphäre aus und beeinflussen sich zu einem bestimmten Punkt damit gegenseitig. Die Blogosphere ist damit zu einem Ort geworden, an dem Gegendiskurse stattfinden. Jedoch ist nicht zu beobachten, dass die Diskussionsbereitschaft und der von Habermas geforderte rationale Diskurs die Blogosphere bestimmt. Vielmehr werden auch hier einfach die Argumente der anderen discourse planes reproduziert. Vielmehr gerät die Debatte um ID zu einem polemischen Schlagabtausch, zu so genannten *flame wars*, die jegliche Kompromissbereitschaft verloren haben, und in denen es nur noch darum geht, die jeweils andere Seite zu verspotten und in einem negativen Lichte dastehen zu lassen.

Die Debatte um Evolutionslehre und Intelligent Design ist ein Schulbeispiel für die amerikanischen Kulturkämpfe. Es ist ein historisch gewachsener Konflikt, der seit Jahrzehnten mit in ihrer Grundform gleichen Argumenten von denselben Gruppierungen ausgetragen wird. So zeigt diese Debatte die tiefen und unterliegenden Risse auf, die die Vereinigten Staaten durchziehen. Diese werden von den polarisierten und aktiven Akteuren vertieft und von den Medien nicht in Frage gestellt, bzw. durch die Art der Berichterstattung noch befördert. Die breite Masse bleibt in der Diskussion außen vor, moderate Akteure haben keine Stimme, sie bleiben stumm. Weiterhin zeigt das Fallbeispiel, dass es in den Kulturkämpfen um Macht geht: um die Macht, bestimmte Begriffe zu definieren, um bestimmten Gruppen zu charakterisieren und ihnen so einen bestimmten Platz in der Gesellschaft zuzuordnen oder gleich zu versuchen, diese aus der gesellschaftlichen Mitte komplett auszuschließen.

ßen, und letztendlich um die Ausrichtung und das Selbstverständnis der amerikanischen Nation. Dabei werden die entsprechenden diskursiven Mittel eingesetzt, um „das Andere“ negativ zu belasten, der Lächerlichkeit preis zu geben, auszuschließen, zu dämonisieren. Dies sind Strategien, die auch in den anderen Konfliktfeldern der Kulturkämpfe zu beobachten sind. Zusätzlich ist zu beobachten, dass, obwohl ein Diskurs stattfindet, die beiden sich gegenüberstehenden Lager nicht wirklich verständigen. Ausgehend von ihren ideologischen Positionen, die auf gegensätzlichen Wahrheiten und Weltanschauungen basieren, gibt es im Konflikt um ID und die Evolutionstheorie keinerlei Anknüpfungspunkte, keinen gemeinsamen Nenner, von dem ein Kompromiss ausgehen könnte. Wie schon seit Jahrzehnten wird die Debatte in den kommenden Jahren weiter ausgetragen werden – und dies immer im Rahmen der amerikanischen Kulturkämpfe, die nach Meinung vieler mit dem Phänomen Beschäftigter auf absehbare Zeit nicht verschwinden und sich zyklisch immer wieder entzünden werden.