

Lund University
Department of Political Science
STVK03 Political Science: Bachelor Thesis
Supervisor: Dalia Mukhtar-Landgren
2019-05-17

The Serendipitous Sail Along the Hegemonic Trail

Discerning American Exceptionalism in U.S. Foreign Policy by
Studying the Political Use of the Concept of Freedom

Mervan Sert 970801
PPE

Abstract

The primacy of hegemonic structures that shape political processes is relevant to purvey an extensive grasp of which central power dynamic is in effect. The United States has a significant role in the international context and frequently incurs the attention of the world when dealing with issues of global nature. This paper studies how American Exceptionalism, a tendency on the U.S. part to view international norms of restriction as superfluous to its engagements, is circumscribed when analyzing how the political concept of freedom is used in publicly conveyed foreign policy. Freedom is studied from the point of explanatory idea approach and critical discourse analysis to elucidate the hegemonic precepts that function as a instructional preamble to propel American Exceptionalism on the international stage. The paper disassembles freedom on a formal level and structural level to unveil the interplay between the material and discursive spheres, and finds that American Exceptionalism encompasses a normative arrangement that zealously ensures that the hegemonic determinants are not precluded. The political vying for public support exerts attrition upon the masses that are rendered disenchanting and passive, and transfers functional control to a minority regime serving special interests.

Keywords: American Exceptionalism, hegemony, discourse, foreign policy, State Of The Union (SOTU)

Number of words: 9,998

CONTENTS

Abstract	2
1 Introduction	4
1.1 Background	4
1.2 Problem	4
1.3 Purpose and Disposition	5
1.4 Earlier Research	6
2 Material and Method	7
2.1 Delimitations and Assumptions	7
2.2 Material	7
2.3 Explanatory Idea Approach	8
2.4 Critical Discourse Analysis	8
2.5 Operationalization	10
3 Theory	11
3.1 The Hegemonic Framework	11
3.1.1 Subjectification by Problematization	11
3.1.2 The Neoliberal Engine	12
3.1.3 The U.S. as a Political Agent	13
3.1.4 Inverted Totalitarianism	13
3.1.5 Synthesis – A Neoliberal Substrate	14
4 Analysis	15
4.1 Disassembling Freedom	15
4.1.1 Freedom on the Formal Level	15
4.1.2 Freedom on the Structural Level	16
4.2 Sanctimonious Intent	17
4.3 American Exceptionalism	18
4.4 Conclusion	19
5 Final Reflections	20
6 References	22

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In January of 2019, Max Blumenthal of The Grayzone conducted a series of interviews with members of the U.S. congress regarding the ongoing Venezuela crisis. Congress members were asked if the American policy toward Venezuela should be construed as meddling and hostile interference. The politicians were clearly baffled and instantly drew upon lines of rationalization, expressing that the U.S. is “a bastion of freedom” and “the superpower of the world” (The Grayzone, 2019). The vast majority of the voices echoed the same sentiment; the U.S. is correct to actively engage in the affairs of Venezuela and use its international political clout accordingly. Central themes to the construction of the modern world, such as sovereignty and international precedent, did not seem to enter the realm of gauging the situation principally. Instead, the arguments made articulated upon notions of state superiority, which entails ramifications that encourage facetious actions in the name of desirable goods, like democracy or freedom. It is rather startling to see how clearly and deeply the idea of the U.S. being the good-guy by definition has permeated the various layers within the political purview, and it raises questions as to what impels this dynamic and obfuscates the motives underneath the public surface. Watching those interviews unfold and the rampant use of disingenuous excuses for some sort of American intervention in Venezuela, evoked my interest in trying to identify the pertinent theoretical factors that bear significance for a conflict being depicted in such a cynical manner.

1.2 Problem

The Earth spins around its own axis whilst simultaneously orbiting around the sun – this is rudimentary scientific knowledge. When it comes to politics, however, it is rather more difficult to procure an extensive comprehension of the mechanisms involved in shaping the true policy objectives and selecting the most suitable agents for execution of said policy. The substantive level of politics, is often submerged in a sea of political talk that makes it hard to discern the activities present in the profound sedimentation of political goals. Political talk is palatable to everyone espousing somewhat reasonable views with respect to the generic template of a civilized world, but also relocates public attention far from the most important focal point – the gateway through that which powerful interests covet passes – and diminishes the utility of having common platforms for political dialogue in the pursuit of continuous societal improvement as the areas of contention are not perceived in their original light. Deliberation is impeded, albeit not overtly, while the guise of a healthy system is maintained. Our orb keeps moving, and humans keep committing political capital to issues that solely let us sail the sea with the winds of the powerful, but not dive into it and explore its structural make-up and inner genesis.

Therefore, it would be apt to invoke the concept of *hegemony*. Noam Chomsky, a renowned but politically marginalized scholar, asserts that hegemony can be understood as a spanning structure of political dominance through cultural control with a core of unmatched power to deter from ever even thinking of altering the system (Chomsky, 2004: 5-11). Hegemony is implicit and reproduced in all social domains in order to uphold its relevance and political leeway; it vindicates itself through the political life as it gets cemented in a normative disposition of action. Mainstream politicians, such as those Blumenthal interviewed, derive

political recourse from that hegemonic disposition. Hegemony is a kind of psychological colonization, which is why it appeals to decision makers without necessitating a real discussion on a matter. The powerful – the economic and political institutions that embody the big players on the hegemonic field and thus have the capacity of shaping the political currents it encompasses – design the political dialogue, or lack thereof, by integrating the political narratives to always serve a number of *special interests*. These interests are what fuels the political machine, but by staging dissent on the formal arenas of politics by enshrining them in a foundation where their very vitality depends on these powerful actors, the rigorous dynamic underpinning it all goes on unshaken (Herman - Chomsky, 1988: XXI-XXIV). Following the second World War and the consummate destruction of Europe, the U.S. succeeded the previous colonial powers and started to wield the torch of hegemony alone. Being the most capable military entity within the western block, America consolidated its position as the dominant economic actor too in the aftermath of the Cold War (Chomsky, 1999: 11-14). The collapse of the bipolar order and the evolution of economic integration, accumulated the hegemonic points of influence in a permanent American context – the rest is merely tangential developments occurring along a pattern of American control and oversight. The present hegemony, then, is codified in a political concept called *American Exceptionalism*; a perception that the U.S. reserves particular rights to act politically and militarily around the world as its role is exceptional and thus greater than all other actors (KXM, 2016). The U.S. departs from political injunctions that supersede norms of abiding by international laws that are formally expressed, and excises all moral consequences. The hegemony mandates that the U.S. imposes the order on others and thwarts all elements that interject opinion critical to the core of the system – the special interests. The U.S. is the paragon of peace, the ship at the front of the armada on the hegemonic sea brandishing freedom. The rest of the fleet may equip the same values and enjoy serene waters – all it requires is obedience.

The hegemonic foundation motions slowly, but all inherent processes are incessant and it takes time for the overall figure of the foundation to change notably as the brunt of politics functions to protract all engagement into material oblivion. The sources of hegemony are material, but its processes are mostly not – they are discursive (Winther-Jørgensen – Phillips 2000: 33-37, 54-57). To establish hegemonic tendencies that shape the traits of political dialogue and precepts touted there, it is plausible to assume that a political concept like American Exceptionalism can be approached and circumscribed via a ubiquitous term such as freedom, widely prevalent in describing the characteristics of the U.S. The issue for this paper I intend to study, is as follows:

How is American Exceptionalism politically conceptualized by freedom in publicly conveyed U.S. foreign policy?

1.3 Purpose and Disposition

American Exceptionalism implies political prescriptions, but this paper is empirical and aims to disclose the relationship between the material and discursive level of the concept. Hence, I have settled upon utilizing a combination of explanatory idea approach and critical discourse analysis. I do not claim to produce a paper with the prowess to exhaust a complete account of American Exceptionalism – that task would be far too extensive and lies beyond the confines of this paper. The goal is instead to circumscribe the notion of American Exceptionalism and

establish its main contents given the context I will present below. The theory will comprise various facets of the underlying hegemony that yields the political landscape; it will function as a framework for the analysis and limits the lines of deduction as to not give room for deleterious subjectivity. In this way, I am rather confident the paper will remain expedient and will configure a cohesive depiction of American Exceptionalism. The method section will present the choices of material and method as well as methodological contemplations. Then, the theory section will establish the hegemonic framework in which the subsequent analysis will anchor. Lastly, the analytical section will use the political concept *freedom* to study American Exceptionalism both materially and discursively. In the end, I hope to unveil a cogent and meaningful description of the essence of American Exceptionalism and what holds the material and discursive level together.

1.4 Earlier Research

Exceptionalism is by no means characteristic of the U.S. alone in a historic context; K.J. Holsti presents in an article from 2010 the tendencies in various state entities in the past to assent to exceptionalist conceptualizations of the own political agenda (Holsti, 2010: 384). Holsti makes an overview of a couple of superpowers in modern history, from the 18th century onwards specifically, and compares them to the current standing of the U.S. to map out the concept in detail and summon theoretical viability for the concept of exceptionalism in foreign policy. From the extensive article, three themes of exceptionalism are easily derived; (A) enlightenment (B) social emancipation and (C) economic virtue. The first theme departs from the idea that some values, especially freedom, are universally desirable and in this sense must be pursued. The own state is unique in bearing the burden of standing up for such values and therefore commits to expansive foreign policy to spread the ideas of progression; enlightenment through friendly imperialism by military violence (Ibid: 395). The second theme concerns implementing freedom in the structure of the state through a robust government which fundamentally leads to the masses being placated via propaganda that shrouds the system in a false sense of democracy (Ibid: 396-397). And the third theme regards the religious undertones of exceptionalism – the divine right to act internationally because the greatness the own state possesses is found in military capability and hegemony through influence, even forceful, on the economy (Ibid: 398). The idea of “what is best for the world is best for our country” is treated as an equivalence and not an implication, thus flipping the underlying logic and instead understanding political affairs the other way around (Ibid: 386). Furthermore, Holsti lists the five main components of exceptionalism that the review informs; (1) exceptionalist state has a responsibility to liberate (2) because of that obligation, no external hedges, such as laws, should curtail the state’s endeavors (3) state exists in hostile world (4) must therefore identify enemies around it and (5) the state is an innocent victim whose idealist messianic mission is under threat (Ibid: 386). Free people are pacific and the ideals – like freedom - of the exceptionalist state must be proliferated. Additionally, Antonio Gramsci’s strident account of hegemony, as explicated by Richard Wolff, professor in Marxian economics, is useful to consider to perceive the adamant nature of exceptionalism. Gramsci points out that objective circumstances, such as economic conditions, are shaped by those in control and make the subjective notions of abhorrent injustices within the collective devoid of any capacity to resist as it is cultured by the material realities (The Michael Brooks Show, 2019). It may seem simple but is nevertheless far from trifling. This paper will accentuate all themes of exceptionalism in relation to hegemony understood as a constant

tension between the objective (material and subjective (discursive) in order to assimilate Holsti's findings in commensurate fashion.

2 Material and Method

2.1 Delimitations and Assumptions

First of all, it would be useful to contextualize the paper at hand in order to retain a clear mode of analysis that is intuitively accessible and confers something palpable. Here, I will swiftly explicate the conditions of this paper to elucidate the scientific trajectory pertaining to the main issue:

- It will be assumed that there is such a phenomenon as a hegemony and that it greatly affects all significant political procedures. This is why the theory section will constitute a compilation of theoretical fragments that are bound together in a common framework.
- In regard to time and space, the issue will be studied from the 9/11-incident and onwards and solely in the American political sphere. The 9/11-incident enhanced the hegemonic tendencies that had already been occurring for some time – the event signified an expeditious process of dismantling domains ruled by democratic guidelines in favor of more open cynicism and brazen politics, as evidenced by the sheer carnage that was American foreign policy following the incident (Chomsky, 2001: 21-26; Chomsky, 2004: 51-53). The point is that the hegemonic foundation shines through clearly after 9/11 2001. American Exceptionalism did not change, it was just reinforced.
- I will use the political concept of freedom to analytically indicate American Exceptionalism; the latter is never stated out loud but the former is rife within the lingual practices of expressing the power relations that American Exceptionalism naturally fortifies. The main analytical tool is therefore the concept of freedom which, in my view, allows for a possible way of approaching the even vaguer notion of American Exceptionalism.

2.2 Material

The material of this paper consists in five State Of The Union speeches (SOTU) from the years 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014 and 2018. SOTU addresses include a formal account of the contemporary political considerations, policies and visions, both on the domestic and international areas. The period chosen is in line with the defined limitations and follow the 9/11-incident and are picked in four year intervals to decouple that which is conveyed from the president who is serving during the specific term. The addresses take place before congress and are broadcasted for the public to watch. They are approximately one hour long with a substantial segment dedicated to foreign policy – the aspect of the SOTU from which I intend to acquire the pieces for applying the analysis to. The SOTU are official and thus I believe it is valid to solicit excerpts of statements from them and fit them into an analysis of American Exceptionalism in regards to foreign policy.

2.3 Explanatory Idea Approach

Analyzing ideas can provide important information about the structuring of an argument and what the true implications of a used concept are. The explanatory idea approach, in contrast to the descriptive approach, does not erect a boundary at the question of what an idea is, but reaches further to also include why it is (Beckman, 2005: 13-15). The point is to distinguish the components of an argument that elevates a sentiment to an explicit idea in order to seek out and explain the origins and consequences of that argument (Ibid: 82). The extent to which this can be done, however, depends on what methodological imperative drives the research. Ideas can either be studied through a lence of contents or a lence of function (Ibid: 13-14). The former aims to identify the specific notion that make up an idea, whereas the latter aims to establish the uses of the idea and is thus more closely related to the explanatory approach (Ibid: 14-15, 83). In regards to the latter lence, the internal validity of the argument is therefore irrelevant as it is redundant for the action of interpreting the function of the argument (Ibid: 88). Furthermore, it can be helpful to differ between idea and actor; the first is in line with the descriptive approach and illuminates the contents, and the second narrows itself to a specific situation with a specific set of premises for an idea and how it relates to actors in that situation (Ibid: 15-17).

When gauging arguments, an explanatory idea approach may result in a more exhaustive analysis than a descriptive one since it, in essence, investigates a kind of causal relation between the consequences of an idea and its origins. The explanatory approach isolates the substantive mechanisms within the arguments that bring cause and effect together. Isolation of the causal mechanisms is key to attain the degree of contiguity in causal relations that is scientifically required (Teorell – Svensson, 2007: 60-65). One way of performing the explanatory approach, is by studying ideas through dimensions, which are applied to discern the layers of an argument in a way that makes it easier to classify the premises and track them to their material origins (Beckman, 2005: 25-28). This point is paramount; an idea approach is of rationalistic character and claims that ideas may be derived from pretenses in the material world (Ibid: 11-13). Dimensions can be stipulated with respect to material circumstances in order to deconstruct an argument – an idea – and categorize it correctly. Additionally, it helps to isolate the mechanisms which shape the consequences of an idea stemming from its material origins. It is the material reality that instigates the formulation of an idea encased in rhetoric. So even if an argument may seem rhetorically pristine, its conditions may not be as pure, and using dimensions as an analytical approach may rectify this problem. It should also be noted that the explanatory approach takes place on the aggregate level rather than the individual level, i.e. explanations only hold true in relation to a group since an individual may be encouraged to act based on a single, personal motive but not a material cause, which is the case for groups. This entails that the explanatory approach is adjacent to discourse analysis which places importance on collective cognitive schemes for understanding the forces that impel action and produce the entire range of power (Ibid: 88-89).

2.4 Critical Discourse Analysis

A discourse can be understood as a constant lingual social practice that designs all human interaction. Discourses house structures of power dynamics that shape social subjects and dispositions of action. In this sense, everything – social, political or otherwise – is discursive and adheres to its pliable form (Winther-Jørgensen – Phillips, 2000: 11-19). Discourses create

the conditions of politics and its actors; the leadership, the citizenry, the institutional offices – all is a product of social processes stimulated by deep seated power relations in the society (Ibid). Political notions and moral values are born out of the discursive and receive social resonance through overt statements that justify a certain codification. The discursive processes are not permanent – they are contingent – and non-essentialist, at least on the theoretical level, but might exude an insidious and deceptive capability of instating something absolved from transience. The discursive work happens unknowingly and hinges an illusion of factuality on the collective consciousness and makes the power relations seem natural and futile to impugn.

There are, however, different schools of discourse analysis. The critical discourse analysis claims that the discursive constitutes most things that can be conceived, but that it also, and perhaps more importantly, can be constituted by material conditions that lie beyond the discursive field (Ibid: 67). All social activity is still instructed via the discursive layers since these are productive for power, which is ultimately what drives social engagement, but there are some sources of consistent value that are not the consequences of mere lingual practices (Ibid: 79-80). It is rather difficult to uncover what this materiality is and where the demarcation line between it and the purely discursive lies. But the fact remains that critical discourse analysis insists on this duality which bears significant implications for how an object of study can be approached, especially when compared to conventional discourse theory, which asserts that everything is encompassed by discourse and that there is no such thing as a discursively resistant materiality (Ibid: 67-69). But part of the vocabulary from conventional discourse theory can be adduced in critical discourse analysis. The point of contingency above permanence is common for both schools. Political concepts, among all other concepts, are affected by this admonition. Therefore, it can be useful to consider a concept in terms of it being a discursive *moment* – a point of seeming conceptual consistency around which other contiguous concepts – *elements* – flow and adopt meaning (Ibid: 57-64). The moment is like a bank with discursive deposits that the elements can access by the lingual connection to the moment in order for them to be arranged properly in the discursive network. But the bank is only just that if it is construed in such a way – the moment is dependent on its surrounding terrain of elements to achieve its status and is in fact simply a conceptual void clad in discursive upholstery. The elements delude the observer to perceive the moment as constant – the processes of giving something meaningless meaning through something else which is also fundamentally meaningless digress from the analytically frustrated state of postmodernism. Critical discourse analysis can, while emulating the conventional vocabulary, still maintain some sense of constant factuality in so far as it admits a discursively independent materiality that may produce adequately fast moments for the postmodern haze to dissipate. The dialectical feature of the critical discourse analysis enables an analytical capacity to assess and affirm discursive processes as direct consequences of material conditions.

When employing critical discourse analysis, a way of decomposing the scheme is by locating interdiscursive aspects of the structure; fragments of other specified discourses that are linked together in a larger lingual practice (Ibid: 77-78). This means that the fragments can be traced to their roots and thus reveal more about what the central power dynamics are. Any kind of political discourse contains an array of political concepts, and may, when evaluating the components separately, prove that there is in fact a plethora of discursive tendencies present, originating from various domains – social, economic, esthetic and so on – and with unique

propensities in regards to power (Ibid). The production of power is interminable and therefore the process of linking discourses is always underway. Tracing discourses might be especially useful when dealing with critical discourse analysis since it can discover the connections to the material sphere more narrowly and thus clearly.

2.5 Operationalization

This paper will operate from the stand point of critical realism. Surveying the respective spectrums of ontology and epistemology, it appears as though none of the extremes can induce the kind of analysis the issue at hand requires. A strictly realist approach will serve the purposes of identifying the material sources for American Exceptionalism well, but would not be endowed with the analytical instruments of gleaning the discursive, both of which are important to comprehend the concept. The same goes for relativism, but the other way around – full focus on subjective processes, which would be more aligned with conventional discourse theory, and no grasp of independent materiality. Critical discourse analysis constitutes a compromise; there are objective circumstances that are not captives of human perception, i.e. there is such a thing as a material world. But those objective values are concerted by subjectivity and are being contextualized accordingly. The material world may exist in itself, but is put in a constant socialization of values that shape discourses. It is therefore fitting to settle upon critical realism since it is obviously compatible with critical discourse analysis and explanatory idea approach. I should point out, however, that there will be a slight preponderance on critical discourse analysis and that the explanatory idea approach merely serves to cover the relevant, but limited, materiality pertaining to the discourse analysis. Furthermore, critical realism makes it possible to enact one of the ideal stances in the philosophy of social sciences, namely the mixture of induction and deduction that allows for deductively logical inference within the delimitations of inductive observations (Hollis, 2002: 66-83). In essence, this entails that a hermeneutically tenable analysis can be derived from an underlying analysis of material conditions, which circumscribe the interpretative area of deduction. This surely serves the purpose of the paper well, as it can illuminate which discursive components are susceptible to which material conditions.

To operationalize American Exceptionalism, I have chosen to indicate its contents through the political concept of *freedom*, and not a more specific theoretical variation. The loose idea of freedom is often included in American political speech and I therefore expect to hear it in the SOTU as well. I will extract quotes from the SOTU that are in direct or indirect relation to the description of freedom in the context of American foreign policy to render a sufficiently cohesive puzzle of American Exceptionalism that can be analytically completed in order to determine its contours. The explanatory dimension, through which the material basis for the discursive uses of freedom and in extension American Exceptionalism is established, will consist of an analytical filter brought from *the propaganda model* – a model originally created to study media critically through five filters. In this case, only one of the filters will be applied to study political speech. The filter – the explanatory dimension – will be called *establishment management* – it touches upon the way those in power steer the political narrative as means for serving the ends of the special interest, which are at the heart of political undertaking (Herman – Chomsky, 1988:19-25). Concepts that are central to democracy, such as freedom, are used in political rhetoric to corral opinion and push toward a consensus that spares the special interests – deliberation is staged since salient material issues are circumvented via the control of political dialogue (Ibid). So, by looking at the SOTU and observing how freedom is

talked about with respect to foreign policy, it may be feasible to spot the material conditions derived from the special interests that shape the overarching discourse. I believe it is necessary to apply this filter in order to exhaust American Exceptionalism in relation to hegemony. However, the analysis will need to concentrate on freedom as a discursive moment and what elements tie to it, which is why an interdiscursive approach is useful. This is done to unveil the normative structure within American Exceptionalism that fundamentally holds it together; many of the pertinent elements may be material, but they are socialized and politicized through speech and therefore subsumed into a discursive power dynamic using the moment of freedom as the main template for sketching the blueprint of American Exceptionalism.

The quotes extracted from the SOTU and the addresses as a whole will not be reflected upon in terms of their truthfulness, which is sometimes a question of degrees and other times a question of unequivocal facts. But the point is not to ascertain the objectivity of what is said but instead to consider the SOTU in regards to the function that the statements correspond to. The SOTU, of course, do encompass fact propositions, but it is far more incisive to analyze the statements in conjunction with how the facts are rhetorically exploited to fit in a wider normative narrative. Material facts themselves are irrefutable, but prescriptions can be grafted onto them which means that the inclusion of facts does not serve to further objective knowledge but rather political proficiency. A concept such as American Exceptionalism does not occupy a stationary position within political parlance, which is why the SOTU must be studied in terms of function. This stance in regard to the SOTU replenishes the need for applying both a material and discursive method. The communicative channels of politics are, in my experience, not results of argumentative sincerity, but constitute savvy constructions of rhetorical deflection that entrench a type of status-quo, malicious or beneficent. American Exceptionalism is a form of status-quo, and not analyzing it beyond the level of material factuality would ignore its political function.

3 Theory

3.1 The Hegemonic Framework

As was established earlier, it is assumed that hegemony exists and that it impacts the manner in which politics is devised. Since hegemony is complex and encircles a plurality of themes, I will in this section designate the intension of hegemony in the context of this paper, bestowing upon the theoretical framework an intelligible outline that works in service of the purposes of the analysis later on. Drawing upon a few different lines of thought with a concluding synthesis of these theoretical fragments, a coherent notion of hegemony will be portrayed.

3.1.1 Subjectification by Problematization

When formulating policy, the idea is to realize it and set about the agenda that the policy decision demands. A policy is a solution for political challenges and is meant to resolve conflict by abating material strife. However, it is also the case that any certain policy disseminates a specific set of ideas in relation to the problem that the policy is bound to. This means that the policy is laden with preconceptions about what constitutes a problem and what does not (Bacchi, 2009: 6-7). It is, in fact, more telling to study how something is

problematized in order to unveil something truly useful about the issue at hand. Problematization can be understood in terms of *governmentality* – in the Foucaultian sense – i.e. regimes of governance that cement rationales for how governing is construed in relation to the population of a society, which creates a process of surveilling the self by the free individual as the discursive patterns of the system are internalized (Ibid: 29-36, 40). Since language is productive for power, it is paramount to untangle the language originating from the formal seat of power as it exerts profuse influence on the way the common discourse is shaped, which in turn means that the problematization is always done at the behest of the powers that be. The contention, therefore, is that the problems per se should not be at the forefront of an analysis regarding public discourse; the focus should be on how those problems are problematized.

The process of problematization also constitutes a process of some discourses subjugating others to subvert some subjects whereas others may thrive (Ibid: 41-42). Divulging what a problem is represented to be rather than what it actually is, delivers more insight on how subjects are formed through language and placed in the hierarchy of social power. Any discourse contains a multiplicity of lingual power derived from problematization and hence are often inconsistent and battle one another through the continuous use of language (Ibid: 39-42, 50-51). Language is not neutral – it is always charged with political power, especially when a problem is described by the government since its problematization is then adopted and formalized in legislation and salient institutions that produce certain depictions of a policy area (Ibid: 48-50). Governmentality – the internalization of the power structure through language – combined with institutional problematization, yield a set of prescriptions that are skewed in favor of specific interests and reproduce their truth status.

3.1.2 The Neoliberal Engine

Governing in a neoliberal context is perceived as being dependent on the norms of capitalism pervading the entire social structure; rationality can only be achieved and implemented by putting competition in front and center first (Nyberg, 2017: 58-61, 77-80). The market should impel governing to serve the interests of the market as it preserves competition, from which the proper morality unravels, and the virtuous procedural model it instigates. The point is not to reach a specific end but instead to maintain a ubiquitous spirit of competition which is the most efficient way of avoiding the tyranny of the majority (Ibid: 66-72). A government that is not guided by competition will drift into a structure of authoritarianism where all government intervention then can only be interpreted as draconian encroachments upon individual freedom. To parry this tendency, the government must merely function to complement the market in its enterprises, but not be the umpire of the market as the force of competition transcends the human ability of political governance (Ibid: 69-73). Competition is not a single behavior, it is a structure of behaviors that might not appear naturally due to a scanty societal framework – therefore this structure must be constructed institutionally by the government (Ibid: 59-62). The actions of the government are, in reality, a kind of coerced freedom understood in terms of freedom in the pursuit of making competition dissolve all other notions of justice. Democracy is superimposed upon competition and must never distort the core dynamics of the market.

3.1.3 The U.S. as a Political Agent

When it comes to the U.S. on the international scene, it is, according to Chomsky, blatantly clear that the political deployment of discourses such as humanitarianism in the spirit of freedom, is farcically ostensible. The U.S. owns extraordinary political clout through its military capabilities and thus arrogates to itself a role that extends the American sphere of interest to encompass all the world (Chomsky, 2004: 14-23). It understands that the only meaningful opposition to its vision of dominance, either through outright militarism or by cultural colonization through the threat of violence or economic annihilation, is popular will and mobilization to dispel the disposition of priorities that flourishes presently. The public's perception of politics must hence be tenuous; propaganda through media and political speech is utilized to stray from the material issues that, were they identified sincerely, could debilitate the entire power structure (Ibid: 3-5, 225-229). The U.S. foreign policy represents a focal point for desirable values, such as freedom. In this way, enemies are more easily identified and targeted in political communication, and the fear that it elicits in the public is used to justify atrocities and rationalize about the moral objectives (Chomsky, 1999: 11-17). This entails that the U.S. considers its right to act in preventive terms – its vocation as moral guardian means that it can strike where ever it may perceive a threat or a potential future threat. This in turn suggests that the U.S. can topple other sovereign governments based on the pretext that they might be perilous to the stability the U.S. covets to entrench its dominance through vast influence, as in the case of the Gulf War in 1990 (Chomsky, 2004: 39-49). Hence, U.S. foreign policy is based in obedience – the greatest international crime is disobedience and nothing else – the rest is a mere peal of propaganda to hide the special interests that drive the process. The idea is to consign political discourse of contrary views to a space of public deliberation where it is not just softly lamented, but harshly castigated through expulsion from the platforms of communication (Ibid: 219-223). A guise of moral virtue is upheld by cynically manufacturing consent around the objectives of the state, stifling all dialogue under the pretext of protection (Herman – Chomsky, 1988: IV-IX). The political climate is supposed to be perceived as innocuous to voices of dissent so that everything seems civil – otherwise people might start mobilizing, which the U.S. fiercely wants to avoid. Other states will have to acquiesce; their role is informed by the militarism of the U.S. and if they play along, America might look the other way when an ally represses and murders its citizens – intentional ignorance in the quest for dominance (Chomsky, 2004: 20-22). The mismatch between the virtuous rhetoric and the actual policy defeats a principled foreign policy; there can be no coherent morality upon intent whose source is not found in honest ethical considerations that simply declare principled intent to be necessary for obtaining a defensible moral position. The breaching of this moral truism is thereby incorporated in political discretion through propagandistic normativity.

3.1.4 Inverted Totalitarianism

One of the most difficult questions for democracy to disentangle is with what economic system it can remain healthy. The essence of democracy is, after all, to install a system built from the bottom and up, and have institutional tools for feeding the processes that are needed for the system to survive. In regimes of classical totalitarianism, politics trump economics; there is a strong but small leadership that pursues policies that are expansive in nature to nurture and sustain the own society since economics are not prioritized (Willits Community Television, 2018). By placing economics in a subservient position in relation to politics, the

population is quickly mobilized and society is in a constant state of preparedness and paranoia that obstructs any institutional reform – the leadership consolidates its power. In the case of inverted totalitarianism, economics and politics have switched places and economic rationale is emphasized (Ibid). Since capitalism is the dominant economic doctrine, its preferences, which focus heavily on the autonomy of the market, functionally override politics – namely the demos – to align with the salient interests of the market, which by virtue of economic tendency are fixed to a small group relative to the electorate (Ibid). This renders a minority in functional power, just like in classical totalitarianism, since the mechanisms dedicated to politics, such as elections, are mere formalities and do not sway the basic dynamic. It is a steady rendition of popular participation that in the end shares many similar symptoms of classical totalitarianism, with one crucial disparity; when economics trump politics, the public is made passive through an illusion of democracy and therefore remain demobilized, which ultimately serves the interests of the markets and the minority in functional power (Ibid).

3.1.5 Synthesis – A Neoliberal Substrate

Now it is time to weld the previous theoretical fragments together. The merge can be understood as constituting the hegemonic grammar in which American Exceptionalism is politically conceptualized. A tight and consistent grammar is integral to a language and its produce – the same goes for hegemony, particularly since it presupposes the prevalence of a specific discourse that furthers certain ideas. In this instance, the grammar of the hegemonic framework can be said to involve the following core components; the subject is military or akin to that, the predicate is the order of preferences derived from the ideals of neoliberal competition, the object is the entire world and, and the main attribute is the desirable good of freedom. The first three categories are material whereas the last is not – it is normative – and is what conditions the actual meaning of a lingual statement where material circumstances are structured in a specific manner. The subject is military, but acts in relation to the object – this is why problematization is so important as it constructs the imperatives for the subject. Those imperatives are tied to the predicate, which are economic since they protrude higher than all else in the pile of policy selection, and coordinates the subject in relation to the object. This is the naked hegemonic process, which is obscured by the attribute – a kind of descriptive post-construction draped over the inherent biases of the grammar, the dominant discourse that corresponds to the hegemonic balance of power. Because of this, the analysis is put on the attribute in order to reveal the manipulated materiality.

The main point of the presented grammar can be called *a neoliberal substrate*. The materiality of the hegemony is pin-pointed by the subject and the predicate. It is important to keep in mind the difference between the grammatical distinctions as to not ail the convictions found in discourse analysis – the abnegation of essentialist tendencies. But since I am studying American Exceptionalism on the assumption of existing hegemony, one discourse is dominating and there is no significant clash worth to investigate. Isolating the materiality of the hegemony is therefore conducive to the purpose of the paper. Refraining inclusion of those categories would provide the critical discourse analysis would too little information. Since this materiality – the neoliberal substrate – is crafting the discursive dispositions, the theories of problematization and inverted totalitarianism are especially poignant, to the backdrop of the neoliberal economic theory, of course. The theory of the U.S. as a political agent pertains mostly to the object – the world – and advances the necessity for tracing the depiction of the object back to the subject and predicate – to the materiality. In sum, freedom

as an attribute is a discursive product dependent on its material roots; grammar shapes language, and language shapes discourse in a final representation of power. American Exceptionalism is a tone – like grammatical phrasing – and does not constitute its own category since it is so seldom openly expressed. Therefore, freedom is the most suitable political concept for circumscribing American Exceptionalism as it is pronounced as the discursive superstructure mounted atop the material base as a linguistically tangible attribute.

4 Analysis

4.1 Disassembling Freedom

In the effort of circumscribing American Exceptionalism, the analysis will have to disband the concept of freedom – the hegemonic attribute – and identify what it resembles politically. Therefore, the analysis is divided into two levels, a formal and structural one, that answer to the material base and the discursive purview respectively. The formal level is cluttered with substance that is organized in accordance with the neoliberal substrate; it is here the establishment management dimension will be applied to explicate the non-discursive. The structural level is more analytically elusive and replete with a dynamic of power that will be attempted to clarify. The quotes from the SOTU will be given sufficient contextualization to exhaust a satisfactory analysis that may corroborate any capacity of the formal level to afflict the tendencies of the structural one.

4.1.1 Freedom on the Formal Level

The function of the statements from the SOTU are in focus here. As was established in the theory section, the neoliberal substrate is made up of a military subject and economic predicate – these are the components ascribed to the establishment management dimension. Beginning with the subject, in the 2006 SOTU, for example, the role of the U.S. is to pursue “the cause of freedom” in regards to tensions around the world and that “no peace by retreat” is the guiding principle for international affairs (Politics 101, 2017b). This is a pervasive notion; the U.S., on its watch as global order keeper – “our security, our leadership, depend on all elements of our power” (Politics 101, 2017d) – is derived from a destined obligation to rule – “we must lead” (Politics 101, 2017c). This role seemingly stems from one fact; the U.S. superior military which endows it with special significance. Iraq is asserted to be “a strategic country” that needs to be fitted into the U.S. wider foreign policy disposition which is just by definition (Politics 101, 2017b). The “unmatched power” of the U.S. is what admits its strategic predilections to a moral pedestal and propels the American subject forward on the international stage (Politics 101, 2018). Throughout all the SOTO, there is a profound sense of the U.S. being a unique agent that may subvert others’ politics to serve the greater good – might equals right.

When it comes to the predicate, it is clear that exerting influence on the basis of economic rationality is virtuous and further vindicates military use as an acceptable political instrument. To embark on lavish military campaigns is tolerable since “the cost of freedom is a price we must pay”, and such international ravaging has, after all, enabled desirable economic pivots – “free markets have lifted people to achieve liberty” (Politics 101, 2017a). Curbing other economic doctrines is justified and the process must be ceaseless to expunge the possibilities

of vicious alternatives from gaining foothold. International communication is characterized by the economic strength of the U.S. which will shape all deliberation – “American diplomacy, backed by the threat of force” – the virtue of the U.S. economic system (which here is apparently asserted to make up the foundation for international diplomacy) is what reinforces the U.S. special agency further (Politics 101, 2017d).

There is a steady conflation of economy and security which cultivates a belligerent foreign policy that supersedes the notion of the U.S. being a country among nations, rather it is one above nations. This conflation aligns directly with the neoliberal substrate and is, in essence, the narrative that the establishment management dimension settles on; “weakness is the surest way to conflict” is an apt sentiment for summarizing what the application of the dimension on freedom entails (Politics 101, 2018).

4.1.2 Freedom on the Structural Level

While not always expressed explicitly, the notion of freedom is often alluded to in varying ways that, without deploying a discursive grip, may seem bland. The relentless process of designing freedom discursively with the colors of the neoliberal substrate beams from the SOTU. The discursive elements that connect to freedom as a moment are generally indicative of the kind of power structure that ultimately morphs into aspects of the neoliberal substrate. It is established that the U.S. presides over a certain prerogative, “our privilege to fight freedom’s fight”, which renders freedom a function of the Americans’ ability to uphold security, which is settled further when freedom is constituted as a notion of protection – the U.S. must initiate “vast operations abroad and increasing vigilance at home to protect freedom” (Politics 101, 2017a). The power of prevention in the name of freedom problematizes the element of security in a way that fuels a subjectification of the U.S. that is in line with the neoliberal substrate, the formal level, which is proof of how the discursive power of the SOTU is constituted by materiality. The U.S. “will always stand on the side of freedom” (Politics 101, 2017c) and implement policy “freeing people from fear” (Politics 101, 2017d). Once again, the notion of freedom is shaped by security and the fear for lack of security in a manner that concedes the active American foreign policy to an unquestioned morality that should not be critically scrutinized since the U.S. is the only actor with the material means for both preempting infractions upon freedom and also stopping them when transgressions have occurred.

Moreover, the American protection of freedom means that “the world turns to us” to seek guidance from the U.S. (Politics 101, 2017d). The governmentality of the U.S. is ingrained in its foreign policy and envelopes the rest of the world – since it is its object – in a similar codification of action and cooperation. The Americans have the final say since they understand freedom better than anyone else. Therefore, the U.S. can “light up the entire world” with its wisdom and force (Politics 101, 2018). This prowess is never cursory and builds on “total American resolve” that reassures the world – the object – of its place in relation to the U.S. which is, in the end, what produces the strongest sense of security – the main element that connects to freedom discursively (Ibid). The production of this power relation is implicit and requires the neoliberal substrate to persist. Since the U.S. is a solitary leader, it rules in minority and therefore the governmentality it espouses navigates the whole world. Minority reign means economics above the rest, which institutes the neoliberal ideals as reference for American international leadership; “the prosperity of freedom through trade”

is the promise of the American vision (Politics 101, 2017b). The two central discursive elements are thus constituted by underlying notions of security and economy that shape the problematization of freedom within a governmentality that advocates policy considered most viable by the U.S., interacting with the activity of subjectification through the neoliberal substrate. The discursive field is indeed inexorably linked to the material field, but it is immensely apparent how the structure of inverted totalitarianism seeps into the very fabric of U.S. foreign policy in the former. Freedom as a discursive moment and hegemonic attribute is, in its infancy, molded by the international leadership structure as it greatly impacts the discursive power dynamic.

4.2 Sanctimonious Intent

On the formal level, economics via the neoliberal substrate are at the forefront. Apart from the conflation of economics and security, which on this level merely functions to articulate the absolute rationale of the economics, there is no immediate production of prescriptions; the conflation solely cements the material realities of the neoliberal substrate but establishes no normative path itself. On the structural level, however, economics and security are separated as two different elements that configure the political concept of freedom as the drive routine for American foreign policy. The economic element is derived from the neoliberal substrate and its essentialist view on America as a subject defined by its military capabilities. But the security element originates from the perceptions the neoliberal substrate reproduces in the international domains; the object – the world with all its nations – tacitly confides in the U.S. the task to eliminate all destabilizing recalcitrant scourges that endanger the virtuous materiality the Americans provide in exchange for obedience – reticence is competence which in turn is political vitality. Security through protection may come from economic and hence material preferences, but the creation of it is discursive in the context of the material framework in regards to which discourse can be constituted. Invoking interdiscursivity, the economic element, or fragment, is brought from material circumstances whereas the security element is brought from a discourse of American unprecedented protection – both make up the central interaction of the critical discourse analysis.

The security element offers normativity; the main prescription is to staunchly obey the U.S. and emulate its material priorities. It is this normativity that constitutes the conceptual glue that holds together the structural level with the formal one; the notion of security is present in both but not individually in the latter, which means that the former engenders the operation of the latter. The formal level by itself does not entail anything specific necessarily, and the structural is dependent on something of material origin to produce discursive power – normativity is needed to reconcile materiality with discursivity. But, since the normativity is shaped on the structural level as a consequence of the formal situation, the prescriptive model ensuing is utterly disingenuous and can be described as constituting *sanctimonious intent*. The adhesive is manufactured on moral improprieties since it builds on a complete disregard for principled morality. The material hegemony demands intentional ignorance since it is only the interest of the minority that matter and perpetuates a the need for crafting propaganda and constructing shrewd communication that festers on the public political platforms. Sanctimonious intent lets the structural level inform the formal level discursively and fuels its mere existence through its normativity, yielding a political dialogue that cannot distinguish the understandable desire for security from the economic situation. Security is politics, and economics are economics, and if the foundational tendencies project the arrangement of

inverted totalitarianism, it is clear which one dominates. The politics, the discursive power dynamics, are used to substantiate the already established economic preferences (Boswell, 2012: 72-74). The structural level is symbolic, epitomizing in discourse the indispensable nature of the formal level.

4.3 American Exceptionalism

So, what does this all signify for the circumscription of American Exceptionalism as a political concept? The establishment management dimension pertaining to the explanatory idea approach, identifies the formal level as being constituted by the neoliberal substrate that harnesses the neoliberal economic ideals of competition for devising a proper political framework. The formal level is the cause which, through the mechanism of the neoliberal substrate and the part of the hegemonic grammar it represents, affects the structural level and the discursive processes. The isolation of the neoliberal substrate and the impact of the materiality on discourse is key to reveal a causality between the different spheres of hegemony that use the concept of freedom – a hegemonic attribute – as a medium for viability. It will then seem as if the U.S., the main actor, rises above the political fray through an intermittent progression of depleting the caveats surrounding the spurs of American foreign policy – it becomes immaculate and no charges can be levied against it without infringing upon the moral supremacy of it. This is where American Exceptionalism is hinted and its face starts prevailing tentatively. The sanctimonious intent – the normative glue that binds the material with the discursive and sublimates the opposing temperaments of economics and politics into one unified entity – crafts this notion of moral supremacy which permits the U.S. to adjudicate all events of importance to its interests in a court of unquestioned righteousness from which unfathomable force can be released upon those politically repudiated. Being alone in this capability, the U.S. must not relinquish its material base that gives it this salient subjectification, i.e. the neoliberal substrate must not be abandoned.

Delving deeper into the abstraction of American Exceptionalism, the governmentality it seemingly rests on is, at this point rather obviously, indicative of an intricate interplay between the grand disposition of inverted totalitarianism and the meticulous processes of problematization. Inverted totalitarianism plants an order of economy above politics – a mere consequence following the advent of the neoliberal political agenda where the only virtue is competition – and hence policy problems, the areas in which the hegemonic subject (the U.S.) is entered, are overshadowed by economic problematization and neoliberal rationality. In order to safeguard the neoliberal materiality to ensure the position of the economics and gratify the insatiable will of the tiny elite whom the economic interest concern, there needs to be some sort of implicit propaganda veil – so implicit it is perceived as natural and thus irrefutable, in this case taking the shape of sanctimonious intent through the structural level. It is a bleak and gloomy observation uncovering that American Exceptionalism accommodates an extremely refined type of authoritarianism embedded in the public political platforms, lying dormant but tainting everything – all political dialogue – around it. The governmentality that unravels functions to discipline popular and in extension international thought according to the preferred economics by the powerful. If someone protests against the demonstrable material issues that is view unfavorably by the powerful minority, political potency is exerted discursively through the structural level by the moral claims it houses. The formal and structural level make up the psychological echelons of the governmentality and is also here held together by sanctimonious intent to delude and deflect. The hegemonic grammar

enforces the rigidity of this governmentality and disseminates an order ostensibly constructed by democratic absolutes such as majority influence.

The conditions of American Exceptionalism constitute a confluence of factors that, by the grace of time, may be granted latency in the political framework, which, in essence, is how hegemony comes about. These factors are rendered malleable to the underlying ideology that paralyzes foreign policy, trapping it in a static design of political maneuvering; neoliberalism is just as influential as any other political track and has vast implications for what politics are prioritized. Peddling economic objectives in political quarters distributes a depiction of materiality to which the public will be amenable if enough outlets confirm the picture. Actors that are “challenging our interests, our economy, and our values” are dangerous and should be subjected to the adversarial side of American might (Politics 101, 2018). Here, it can be noted that American economic interests are the primary areas of concern since these are integral to the shaping of the measurements of American power – namely the neoliberal predicate. The world – the object – will be left politically destitute with no economic guidance and thus must be taken under the wing of an economic leader; “we intend to shape it”, regarding the global economy, so that just and pragmatic politics are spread sparsely impinged by unsavory actors that do not fall in line (Politics 101, 2017b). This, again, reiterates the fact that economics are above politics, and the ripples of this construction are felt clearly beyond formal politics – it trickles down into the governmentality of average folk and attains definitive status and a life of its own. The U.S. is perched on a beam overlooking its object and inflicting its power “to extend American compassion” to the world and its lost inhabitants (Politics 101, 2017a). This aloofness is seemingly central to American Exceptionalism as it produces a sense of politics that focuses on conformity and that the supposed chivalry of American foreign policy is maintained. American Exceptionalism is then just as much about tricking Americans into thinking about its country in terms of moral superiority as it is about making the world believe it must bow to the material norms the U.S. purports. The semblance of sustainability of the material system emanates from the structural politics it entails – a sort of psychological catalyst – and repeals an agenda of materiality where problems are handled in real terms, and replaces it with convoluted discursive problematization that fuels a subjectification helpful to the neoliberal substrate and the hegemonic materiality. Embracing American Exceptionalism means, by virtue of its capacity to disparage everything that is considered to constitute moral contraventions because they undermine the coveted materiality, joining a hefty contingent of political intransigence that is made fruitful by putting all resources into keeping things as they are. American Exceptionalism is a convergence of material and cultural dominance.

4.4 Conclusion

It might seem a venturesome extrapolation to circumscribe American Exceptionalism by the political concept of freedom, but I maintain that it is, at the very least, a telling way of revealing the hegemonic calibration present in the notion. The objection might be that it tarnishes the validity of the paper, but my contention is that the theoretical framework allows the concept of freedom to be instrumental to the approximation of American Exceptionalism which was all this paper set out to do. When it comes to the intersubjective character of this paper and its potential value for cumulative science for which it may become relevant, as well as for society as a whole since it sheds some light on what political communication means for the creation of rhetorically hidden precepts, it is worthy to note that the subject matter is fairly complicated since it encompasses such intangible dynamics and therefore, presumably,

require some scientific good will when it comes to the interpretation of the concepts applied in this work. The analytical reasoning straddles a wide surface but does so to illustrate the legitimacy of the problem formulated and the need for the answer to be somewhat complex too.

The result itself is not as ambiguous as it might seem at first glance. American Exceptionalism is the prescriptive overlay upon material circumstances that the ruling minority desperately wants to preserve. It is implicit, prowling in the darkness of the dominant governmentality, but its normativity makes it a fervent enforcer of the discourse needed to continue the material status-quo. The political concept of freedom proved an efficient tool for disclosing these tendencies, as it, in regards to the SOTU, allowed for an extensive decomposition of the interplay between the material base and the discursive superstructure. Freedom is a diversion that conveys to the public the necessity of resuming business as usual to avoid confrontation with looming global programs that reshuffle the order. American Exceptionalism denigrates alternatives to economics trumping politics through sanctimonious intent which makes other nations dependant on American benevolence. It is almost a religious dedication to the current materiality that treats the neoliberal substrate as a hallow of awe and unwavering support and thus constitutes an incredibly robust regime of public control.

5 Final Reflections

American Exceptionalism is a manifestation of cynical pragmatism – an idea that rescinds principled international norms and ameliorates the affects of an organized national collective; the masses are demobilized and live by the whims of the material overlords. The idea of freedom functions to let the concerns of the electorate coalesce with those of the ruling elite minority and thereby integrates the subtle notion of the U.S. being a supreme actor into the colloquial sphere of politics – the system becomes self-serving and non-falsifiable. The feat of implementing this system is not based in ideology in its true sense, but rather an esoterically astute devotion to the material roots of the present hegemony. It is a bizarre form of embellished aristocracy working for special interests and rendering democracy decrepit. Critiquing the international agency of the U.S. is by definition slighting freedom – the metric for civility – and means unleashing the ire of the political establishment. American Exceptionalism is the software of the government functioning as a constant recrimination of any other political volitions – pernicious aspirations worthy of reproach - than those pontificated by the establishment.

Judging from the answers given in Blumenthal’s interviews on Capitol Hill, it is abundantly clear that aspects of American Exceptionalism determine the stance voiced in the top tier of political America. The crisis in Venezuela will probably be an instructive show of American Exceptionalism in action. Recently, John Bolton, national security advisor to the current Trump administration, said that “it will make a big difference to the United States if we could have American oil companies really invest in and produce the oil capabilities in Venezuela”, not even bothering to muster the level of eloquence needed to retain the facade of U.S. foreign policy (Fox Business, 2019). This kind of rhetorical complacency is surely testament to how absolute the premises of American Exceptionalism are perceived; if this is accepted as a sound starting point for considering international affairs and drafting policy

recommendations, it is difficult to see how the ardently expansive, or outright imperial ambitions of the U.S. can be doused without upsetting the material power relations significantly. Fomenting a coup in Venezuela may maintain the status-quo for now, but it is not as clear if it will do so in the long run – hegemonic shifts happen but they take time, so the longevity of American Exceptionalism is quite uncertain. The U.S. fronts the hegemonic fleet toward an ever more sinister horizon, mounting upheavals in the distance hard to envisage.

6 References

- Bacchi, Carol Lee. 2009. *Analysing Policy: What's the Problem Represented to Be?* French Forest, N.S.W.: Pearson.
- Beckman, Ludvig. 2005. *Grundbok I idéanalys*. Stockholm: Santerus förlag.
- Boswell, Christina. 2012. *The Political Uses of Expert Knowledge: Immigration Policy and Social Research*. Cambridge: Cambridge Press University.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1999. *The New Military Humanism: Lessons From Kosovo*. London: Pluto Press.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2001. *11/9*. Ordfront förlag.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2004. *Hybris: USA: s strävan efter global balans*. Ordfront förlag.
- Fox Business. 2019. *John Bolton: I don't think Maduro has the military on his side* [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8av-cPP1uPE> (Retrieved 2019-04-11).
- Herman, Edward S. – Noam Chomsky. 1988. *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media*. New York and Toronto: Random House.
- Hollis, Martin. 2002. *The Philosophy of the Social Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Holsti, K.J. 2010. "Exceptionalism in American foreign policy: Is it exceptional?", *European Journal of International Relations*. 17(3): 381-404. DOI: 10.1177/1354066110377674
- KXM. 2016. *Noam Chomsky Interview on Cultural Hegemony* [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXYnqRjxEsw> (Retrieved 2019-04-09).
- Nyberg, Linda. 2017. *Market Bureaucracy: Neoliberalism, Competition, and EU State Aid Policy*. Diss. Lund: Department of Political Science, Lund University.
- Politics 101. 2017a. *State Of The Union Address 2002* [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzLDITAgYJc&t=18s> (Retrieved 2019-04-03).
- Politics 101. 2017b. *State Of The Union Address 2006* [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3Qtw23wa1w> (Retrieved 2019-04-03).
- Politics 101. 2017c. *State Of The Union Address 2010* [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKgZ7D-9vss> (Retrieved 2019-04-03).
- Politics 101. 2017d. *State Of The Union Address 2014* [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gDZRQehrCA> (Retrieved 2019-04-03).
- Politics 101. 2018. *State Of The Union Address 2018* [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0lhdsFy2YY> (Retrieved 2019-04-03).
- Teorell, Jan – Torsten Svensson. 2007. *Att fråga och att svara: Samhällsvetenskaplig metod*. Malmö: Liber.
- The Grayzone. 2019. *Is the US Meddling in Venezuela? Max Blumenthal Asks US Congress Members* [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrapYLtkBhY> (Retrieved 2019-04-04).
- The Michael Brooks Show. 2019. *TMBS – 87 – Bernie Crushes Fox News & Richard Wolff on Gramsci, UBI* [Video]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heF_h8EcwA8 (Retrieved 2019-04-17).
- Willits Community Television. 2018. *Dr Sheldon Wolin on Totalitarian America, in Willits CA, 2003*. [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BesbZDeZeTE> (Retrieved 2019-04-05).

- Winther-Jørgensen, Marianne – Louise Phillips. 2002. *Diskursanalys som teori och metod*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.