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Creative Positioning: "Let's Talk as We Wait"

Character Biographies

Jack Spinner is a 25 year old single white male. He recently completed college in the study of Psychology, now in graduate school, working on his PhD. Aside from being a student, he works odd jobs to pay his tuition, but works most frequently at the library as an assistant. His annual income, with all jobs, comes to roughly \$11,000. He considers himself an agnostic, and thus does not attend church. He aligns himself with the Independent party, mostly due to the fact that he never quite liked the other candidates and he always liked the underdog. He rents his apartment, and his only mode of transportation is his Vespa. When he has a spare moment, he enjoys attending the local anime club, writing stories (primarily for scholarships), reading, and catching a rare nap. He enjoys tacos, Shepard's pie and salad, and would never miss an episode of Prison Break. The values that Jack holds on to and believes in the most are his civil liberties, mostly because without them he would have gotten in a lot of trouble. He aspires to become a Doctor of Psychology. Deep down (and even out in the open, depending on his mood), Jack thoroughly believes that the president is actually evil and totally unfit to run the country. His biggest regret in life is nothing big, but he wishes he would have used the free speech zones more often while in college, particularly in his first and last years.

Clair Halliwell is a 35 year old, married white woman. She completed college some ten years

ago with a Master's in Political Science. She currently works as a college teacher teaching American government, and makes about \$35,000 annually. She aligns herself with the Catholic religion, but attends church every so often. She also fancies herself a strong Republican who will follow the President to the bitter end. She owns her own house and drives an affordable Ford. When she finds time for leisure, she enjoys spending time with her family. The last time she had a night out, it was for her anniversary with her husband of now seven years. Her favorite foods are chocolate, meatloaf, and potatoes, and she always watches Law and Order with her family while they eat. Clair believes strongly in the government and her civil liberties (most often in that order), but secretly believes the President could use some serious improvements. She dreams of being the first Lady President. Her greatest regret was not getting a Doctorate in Political Science.

-LET'S TALK AS WE WAIT-

August 21, 2007. 12:00pm. An open presentation on America's policies is being held at the City Hall at 12:30 that afternoon. Jack Spinner, on his yellow Vespa, parks right next to Clair Halliwell's black Ford as she is getting out. Without saying a word to each other, they walk into the crowd inside the City Hall and get their seating tickets and name tags. A few minutes later, they are both surprised to find that they are seated next to each other.

Jack: *(In a joking tone)* If I didn't know any better, I'd say you were following me!

Clair: I could say the same thing *(chuckles)*.

Jack: So what brings you here *(looks at name tag)* Clair? Obviously, you came to see the presentation on the US's policies. Anything specific?

Clair: *(Looks at Jack's tag)* To be honest Jack, nothing really.... Well actually, now that you

mention it, I'd like to hear more about the Patriot Act.

Jack: (*Sarcastic*) You mean how it's doing such a good job protecting Americans from terrorism and being a great tool that we are all benefitting from?

Clair: More or less.

Jack: Clair, you know I'm being sarcastic, right?

Clair: Yes, but I'm being completely serious. I think that the media is giving the Patriot a horrible reputation. What purpose does our government have to hurt its citizens?

Jack: To be quite honest, because the government is paranoid.

Clair: That's just your opinion. Plenty of people think that the Patriot Act is great.

Jack: Sorry, but I really have to disagree. What you just said is only accurate if you think that only one-third of the population is plenty of people.

Clair: Oh, really. Can you support that one?

Jack: GallupPoll.com. I searched "USA Patriot Act," and clicked on a page written by a Mr. David Moore. According to his poll, in a 2-to-1 margin, Americans aren't very happy about the abilities the government has been given involving our civil liberties. A lot of them think it goes too far, specifically one third. The only majority supporting it seems to be those in the Republican party. I should probably tell you that I had to take a lot of research classes in college. If there was one thing I learned, it is to do your research before getting involved in something.

Clair: (*Slightly taken aback, then smirks*) I'll have you know, I am a very loyal Republican, and I agree with the Patriot Act 100%. I also feel it's helping more than hurting. Do you read a periodical called Human Events?

Jack: No...

Clair: If you did, you'd have found an article by David Freddoso called "Patriot Act Aided in 179 Terror Convictions." Anyone would agree that the Patriot Act is an excellent tool for catching terrorists after that. I won't go into much detail, but let's just say that some of those people that were caught lived here in the US and were in motion to start attacking. Because of the Patriot Act, law enforcement was able to stop them! How can you say it's going too far when it saved us like that?

Jack: Simple. Though it may have saved us from that, who's to say they would have gone through with it? It's psychology, my dear Clair. Lots of people, terrorists or not, do not have the courage to do certain acts, for fear of the immense consequences. Politically speaking, however, did that article mention how the government knew about their planned acts?

Clair: Yes, through surveillance, of course.

Jack: *(Opens his mouth to interject, but is stopped)*

Clair: *(Holds up one finger)* But before you can say that it is unconstitutional or unlawful, the act gives law enforcement agencies the ability to search without good reason sometimes. If the person in question seems suspicious, the government could put them under surveillance as a safety precaution. That doesn't necessarily mean they'll be convicted.

Jack: Touche. But it doesn't bother you that you could be under surveillance without ever knowing?

Clair: I'm behind what the government wants 100%.

Jack: Being behind anything 100% is dangerous, you know.

Clair: I have experience. Thirty-five years of it, to be exact. Not to mention a Master's degree in Political Science. I admire your gusto, but I'll get you in a corner no matter what.

Jack: *(In a somewhat challenging way)* I'm a spry 25 with a B.A. in Psychology. I think I can manage.

Clair: *(Looks momentarily insulted)* Okay. What else do you have?

Jack: There are two articles out there, one that was in School Library Journal called "Senate Expands Patriot Act" by Lauren Barack, and another in Information Today called "Just Because You're Paranoid..." by Dick Kaser. They both essentially tell the nation that the Patriot Act is allowing the government to follow our book records at libraries and bookstores, and we can't request information about whether or not we are being monitored through that power. That doesn't seem very fair, does it?

Clair: It is done that way so that if a terrorist were to ask, he can't try to hide his tracks or bribe the shop keeper or librarian to erase the records. I read those articles, by the way. I can't say I agree with them, but they raised good points for opposition of the act.

Jack: Before I bring anything else up, I need to know: How do you feel about our president? You say you back the government up 100%, and you're 100% Republican. You have to have some kind of view of him or even his cabinet or other members of the government he supports?

Clair looks up in thought for a moment. She almost says something, but then hesitates with a strange facial expression. After about 20 seconds she finally responds.

Clair: The honest truth is though I am completely behind our president, his members and the government, I do find in them a number of flaws. Why?

Jack: I just don't see how you can be totally supportive of a government who'd allow a law like the Patriot Act to be passed. I wanted to hear your opinion of them.

Clair: Of what importance is my opinion to you?

Jack: I'm reading you right now. In other words, looking for a corner to get you stuck in. All right, here's another question: Do you like political cartoons, Clair?

Clair: (*A little nervously*) Occasionally...

Jack: So you know that the editor has to approve of the cartoons that make it into their paper? What does that tell you?

Clair: Editors don't want any distasteful material in their papers.

Jack: Right. But if many papers allow cartoons against the act, doesn't that show that many people are against it? For instance, in the Denver Post, a political cartoonist by the name of Mike Keefe drew a cartoon called "Patriot Act Renewal." I thought it was pretty funny.

Clair: Why?

Jack: Alberto Gonzales, the Attorney General that President Bush appointed himself, is dressed up as a fireman. With a fire extinguisher labeled "Patriot Act Renewal" he extinguishes the flames on the Statue of Liberty's torch. In the process, he says with a smile on his face "Wouldn't want to let this thing get out of control..." You get the joke, right?

Clair: Yes, and I am not laughing. That is only the opinion of one person, not to mention a cartoonist. (*Sighs*) This is what I meant earlier about the media giving the Patriot Act a bad name, but I now feel inclined to add the government in that statement as well.

Jack: I'll admit that the media has its share of spin doctors, but this is an entirely relevant cartoon! He fired a number of attorneys using the Patriot Act in an abusive way. Don't you watch CNN?

Clair: Occasionally, but I prefer Law & Order. I can't picture you watching CNN, Jack.

Jack: It's all I can watch when I'm at dinner at my apartment's cafeteria: It's all they have on.

Personally, I like Prison Break.

Clair: It suits you. (*Chuckles*)

Jack: (*Raises a skeptical eyebrow*) Whatever. Can you throw anything else my way? I'm all for another person's opinions.

Clair: I subscribe to America. It's a Catholic weekly here in America. It covers an array of different things, but there was one article from two years ago that I recently had to do some research on. It was called "The Patriot Act and Civil Liberties," and it weighed out in detail the good and bad sides in terms of their opinions of the Patriot Act. They don't feel it should be abandoned. They see what it is doing and they just see some room for revision.

Jack: Didn't you just say it weighed both sides of the argument? That sounded an awful lot like solo-support for you. It had to have said more. What was the side that had the opinions against the PA?

Clair: You got me. Just racial profiling and immigrant discrimination. But it's all in the name of safety for our country. You can't be too safe in today's world.

Jack: I got the idea you were a bit of a political zealot, but not a racist. Do you really think that it's fair that the Patriot Act allows for racism or discrimination?

Clair: I'm not a racist, and that doesn't always happen. It merely depends on those who use it.

Jack: Which would bring us back to Gonzales. However, that would be a digression. Recently, a site called Amnesty International USA came out with an article filled with little caveats about the Patriot Act and how we as US citizens can get it changed or maybe even stopped. It really didn't go into much detail about the benefits, but when you read what it had to say about the consequences, they seem to dwarf the benefits. I also like the fact

that this site is a branch of a Nobel Prize winning organization concerned with protecting human rights.

Clair: Nice source, but you just made the same mistake I did about leaving out the other side of an argument. Though that is a very credible source, they don't list any of the benefits that come with the act. You cannot have bad without good. Similar to how I am not too fond of salad's taste, even though it is good for me. If you don't like something, you'd put more emphasis on the bad rather than the good. *(Smirking)* It's psychology, my dear Jack.

Jack: *(Irritated at the comment about the salad and the remark about psychology)* Fine, at least we're even. Well then how about this. In an article in USA Today, the great tagline used for said article was "Today's debate: Homeland Security. Our View: Combating terrorism shouldn't mean terrorizing our own citizens." The real kicker about this article, it says in black and white that the Patriot Act was rushed into passing. Looking at the time line, that's pretty accurate, isn't it? The government was so worried, that they rushed the act into action before many of the signers knew what it was really doing! If that doesn't say "This was a pretty half-assed idea, wasn't it?" I don't know what does!

Clair: I read that article, too. "Fix flaws before renewing Patriot Act," right? That was a very well written article. It almost had me convinced the government may have made quite an enormous faux pas, but I also support the benefits and the government. Sorry I can't let you make any headway with that. I will say this however: For someone who doesn't study political science, you are amazingly adept at research methods and the support of your ideas of public policies.

Jack: I could say the same thing. *(Smiles)*

Jack looks at his watch and notices it's 12:40

Jack: Oh, my God! The presentation should have started by now! We are in the right place, aren't we Clair?

Clair: (*Looking around, shocked*) This is the right place, alright. And it seems we are quite the spectacles, Jack. Look around.

Looking around, he sees everybody in the room, including the presenter is staring at the pair, listening intently.

Jack: (*Embarrassed*) Sorry, we're done! We didn't mean to keep you from presenting!

Clair: We should leave.

The room explodes into applause.

Jack: (*With a confused smile*) What's going on?

Clair: I think they liked our little debate. (*Chuckles*)

After the applause dies down, the presentation begins 15 minutes late, and skips the section on the Patriot Act, as that seems to have already been taken care of.

Annotated Works Consulted

Barack, Lauren. "Senate Extends Patriot Act." School Library Journal. Jan. 2006. 16.

It is difficult to say who Lauren Barack is due to the fact that any information on her is hard to find if not completely nonexistent. All that can be said is that she writes for School Library Journal, a periodical published for librarians who work with young children. It is also not very widely read, having only over 100,000 readers and 38,000 subscribers. Despite that, Ms. Barack writes this particular article for the librarians of young children. In her article, it is found that the Senate stood their ground and got a six month extension on the antiterrorism law. This law holds 16 provisions that are important to many people, because without them, the reauthorization of the Patriot Act would have meant four years of two very controversial provisions. Those provisions are the authorization of roving wiretaps and secret warrants for library and bookstore records. This is important to librarians, as it pertains to them, but at the same time is important to everyone, as it means the country has more time to revise the Patriot Act before it is completely reauthorized. This is actually useful in the sense that it shows that America is making its views heard and the government is acting on them.

Caldwell, Robert J. "British Terror Plot Shows Why U.S. Needs the Patriot Act." Human Events. (21 Aug. 2006): 16. Academic Search Premier. EBSCO. U. Central Florida Library, Orlando. 29 Mar. 2007 <<http://library.ucf.edu>>.

Robert Caldwell is the editor of the San Diego Union-Tribune's Sunday "Insight" section. This article was definitely pointed towards the more educated citizens and who are interested in world events. Though the USA Patriot Act (PA) is only mentioned once, Mr. Caldwell hits it home that the events that happened in London, England not too long ago

(the prevented terrorist bombings of several British airliners) is a good reason for the United States to have the PA, as well as a freely monitoring NSA, and a Treasury Department-CIA team. The greater part of his article discusses the “what’s” of the occurrences in London involving the prevented plot to blow up a number of airliners in mid-flight; also the “why’s” explaining why the Western world is under attack by Islamic nations, reasons such as our support for Israel. Mr. Caldwell did a great job writing this article, as it provides the reader with thought provoking ideas that may change their thoughts and opinions about the need for the PA. As far as support for the PA goes, this is a rare find and will prove most useful in further research on the ups and downs of the PA itself, as well as the public’s opinion of it.

Carlson, Caron. “Patriot Act hits rocky road to renewal.” eWeek 21 Nov. 2005. 16.

Though not much can be found regarding the work history of Caron Carlson, based on her article in eWeek, it is clear she is a competent journalist. Her article is aimed at an older audience, particularly those who are in the work force, as well as the lower-, middle- and upper-classes. Ms. Carlson’s article goes over the immense power that the USA Patriot Act (PA) gives law enforcement agencies. A shocking bit of information provided by Ms. Carlson came from an interview with Ms. Lisa Graves, senior counsel for legislative strategy for the New York American Civil Liberties Union. The idea is that NSL (National Security Letter) recipients have the ability to challenge certain orders by the FBI. It is then revealed that that particular ability as well as other abilities were eliminated. However, it was then agreed that they can challenge it, but if the government shows interest in national security, courts have to accept the order as the last period in a sentence, so to speak. Ms. Graves, in response said “It makes nods at checks and balances

and then takes things away. You're given a right to challenge that means nothing." With that statement, Ms. Carlson made the point that there is a very serious and unfair flaw in the PA that is going to affect many different people and there is virtually nothing that can be done about it. It seems she is another writer who writes in protest of the PA, and she makes a very convincing argument in terms of our ability to protect ourselves from the government.

"Fix flaws before renewing Patriot Act." USA Today. 21 July 2005 12a-:Academic Search

Premier. EBSCO. U. Central Florida Library, Orlando. 27 Mar. 2007

<<http://library.ucf.edu>>.

USA Today is a national American daily newspaper, and the widest circulated in the country. It does not just center on politics, but an array of different topics such as sports, money and life. It provides color and charts to appeal to most any audience wishing to keep up with the times. In their article "Fix flaws before renewing Patriot Act," it begins with the tag line: "Today's debate: Homeland security. Our view: Combating terrorism shouldn't mean terrorizing our own citizens." The article itself describes in an easy to understand way that the Patriot Act was rushed into passing. They mention that the time has come where revisions can be made to change or better the act, but it seems unlikely that it will happen. USA Today then lists a number of reasons that changes may or may not occur, the most outstanding being a quote from President Bush, "This is no time to let our guard down and no time to roll back good laws." That itself shows political bias on the part of the President. None of the reasons given make the nation feel any better about the situation at hand, and it also seems as if not much will be done to alleviate that worry. This will prove useful in arguing the side of the argument that wants the Patriot Act to be

abolished or heavily revised. The evidence given is enough to draw the conclusion that Americans (or many of them) are not pleased at all with the act and fear it is terrorizing them and not stopping the terrorists.

Freddoso, David. "Patriot Act Aided in 179 Terror Convictions." Human Events 19 July 2004: 5. Academic Search Premier. EBSCO. U. Central Florida Library, Orlando. 29 Mar. 2007 <<http://library.ucf.edu>>.

David Freddoso is a reporter for *Evans and Novak Inside Report*, and formerly the weekly *Human Events*. He has been featured on several different programs for interview, and has a master's degree in Journalism from Columbia's Pulitzer School of Journalism. Considering the agencies Mr. Freddoso works/worked for, it can be said that this particular article was written for an older audience, somewhere from 25 and up, and for any social class, given they have some education and understand current events. Mr. Freddoso's article tells how the USA Patriot Act (PA) aided in the capture and conviction of 179 terror convictions. He takes into account that some people may not understand some of his article or the material it covers, so he does not use difficult terminology to confuse the readers to believing the subject is right or wrong. He explains how the act was utilized, and was followed by several stories that ended in the apprehension of terrorists. He also mentions that before the PA, "information gathered using a warrant issued under FISA could not be shared with ordinary criminal investigators pursuing the same or related suspects." Despite all that, the PA was able to assist in the capture. This is a great article in the argument for the PA being a good thing for this country. One does not find many of these out there.

Kaser, Dick. "Just Because You're Paranoid ..." Information Today. Sept. 2004: 29.

Academic Search Premier. EBSCO. U. Central Florida Library, Orlando. 29 Mar. 2007 <<http://library.ucf.edu>>.

Dick Kaser is *Information Today*, Inc.'s vice president of content. This easy to read article can be read and understood by educated people of most social classes and serves the purpose of showing that the USA Patriot Act (PA) has even reached our libraries. Though mostly quotations, Mr. Kaser describes the feelings of a librarian, a Ms. Emily Sheketoff, and the actions she is taking against the PA and the negative consequences it will have on libraries and bookstores. One of those effects would be that librarians are not allowed to divulge information pertaining to official requests for an individual's library records. She is now-and since this time, has-begun a petition against these provisions, proving that she is very unhappy about the PA. This is furthered by her opening statement: "The Justice Department says there is no need to be concerned, and we are just being hysterical and paranoid." Though this article lacks any further information by Mr. Kaser other than that single interview, it provides evidence that the PA is spreading further and further throughout our lives, right down to the books we read. This would be a useful article in the argument against the PA, especially for librarians and bookshop owners.

Keefe, Michael. "Patriot Act Renewal." Cartoon. Denver Post. 8 Apr. 2005 . 27 Mar 2007 <<http://www.sitnews.us/Caroonists/040805/cartoons.html>>.

Michael Keefe is an accomplished political cartoonist whose works are published in the Denver Post, as well as a number of other papers and webpages. Most of his works are that of a political satirist and have a main focus of making fun of the many noticeable moments our government has in a sophisticatedly humorous way. His cartoons can be

accessed by anyone who has access to the internet or one of the papers he is published in and they can be easily understood by anyone, so long as they understand what is currently happening in politics. In the cartoon entitled “Patriot Act Renewal,” we see Alberto Gonzales dressed up as a fireman spraying the Statue of Liberty’s flame with a fire extinguisher labeled “Patriot Act Renewal.” With a mean smirk on his face, he says “We wouldn’t want to let this thing get out of control...” The overall purpose of this cartoon seems to be in protest of the renewal of the US Patriot Act in 2005, as it depicts Attorney General Alberto Gonzales snuffing out our civil liberties by extinguishing the flames of liberty. This is appropriate since there have been times where he has allegedly been found using the PA illegally in his mission to find and wipe out terrorism. Mr. Keefe’s cartoon helps my research by supporting the anti-Patriot Act side of the argument in my research project. He effectively makes Gonzales out to be a threat and a danger to our civil liberties, which he must have found is a shared opinion by many people.

Moore, David “Americans Protective of Civil Rights.” Gallup Poll. 21 Dec. 2005. 1 Apr. 2007.

<<http://www.galluppoll.com/content/?ci=20572&pg=1>>.

Gallup Poll has proven throughout the years to be a very accurate in their surveys of political happenings. These polls can be given to almost anyone, as it is a way to find the nation’s opinion; also, due to the fact that they do many of their polls via auto-dial, many of the people that can be surveyed need a phone. David Moore is one of the members of Gallup Poll that issues out these surveys, and then writes a summary of what the polls showed. In his summary “Americans Protective of Civil Rights,” he mentions in the very beginning that “by a 2-to-1 margin, Americans say they’re opposed to allowing the government to violate basic civil liberties while fighting terrorism.” More specifically on

the Patriot Act, 1/3 of those being polled say it goes to far, with Republicans being most supportive of it. This source speaks volumes in a very limited space. The author may have somewhat biased answers because Gallup is often only done via auto-dial and through subscription. Despite that, this information still stands strong on much of the public's opinion of the Patriot Act. This information can be used in either situation due to its numbers and its pseudo-biased information.

Olsen, Stefanie. "Patriot Act draws privacy concerns." CNetNews.com 26 Oct. 2001. 27 Mar. 2007 <<http://news.com.com/2100-1023-275026.html>>.

Stefanie Olsen is a Staff Writer for the website CNet News.com who, this article, writes about political issues in today's world and is targeted at any citizen who is semi-educated lower, middle, or upper class with computer access and an interest in the current events of the time. Soon after the first signing of the USA Patriot Act (PA), Ms. Olsen begins the article by explaining what the PA is meant for, and then goes into deeper information of what some mean to do with it. Much of this information was given by direct quotes by those who have the capabilities with which to act on the PA. Ms. Olsen then explains what could be done with the new act in action, which was inevitably followed by the people who find the PA to be a dangerous action, "...passed in haste..." Those people find that the PA will "give law enforcement too much leeway to collect private information on people on the periphery of investigations." In Lamén's terms, too much spy power. Though CNet News may not be the most widely read web news on the internet, and this article is about six years old, it still paints a fine depiction of the first positive and negative reactions to the signing of the PA in 2001, and Ms. Olsen does a great job supplying the readers with thoughtful insight and quotes from both sides of the

opposition.

“The Patriot Act and Civil Liberties.” Editorial. America. 1-8 Aug. 2005: 4.

America is a weekly national magazine that is published by the American Jesuits. Much of their material revolves around the Roman Catholic Church and how it relates in certain aspects to American political and cultural life. Given that they are a magazine published by American Jesuits, it is safe to say that this article is geared mostly toward Roman Catholic readers of the middle- and upper-class. In their editorial, they actually weigh both sides of the situation revolving around the USA Patriot Act (PA), giving first their opinion of the weaknesses of it and the revisions they feel should be made, followed by the reasons it should not be abandoned, but heavily revised. It mostly goes into depth on the subject of racism and discrimination of minority groups because of many of the PA’s provisions. As a matter of fact, it is not just the immigrants that suffer because of it, but largely the minorities that already exist here in the United States. Though America, heavily weighs out the goods with bads in their article, it is clear that they see both sides of the coin and wish to see changes. This is one source that will prove useful on both fronts of the argument about the PA.

“‘War on Terror’ Human Rights Issues.” Amnesty International USA. 2007. 29 Mar. 2007

<<http://www.amnestyusa.org/waronterror/patriotact/>>.

Amnesty International is a Nobel Prize-winning grassroots activist organization with numbers reaching past 1.5 million. Their organization is, in essence, about protecting human rights. Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) is their United States branch. In this caveat-filled article about the wrongs of the USA Patriot Act (PA), they try to reach out to anyone who cares about their privacy and other rights, particularly older teens and

adults. Their article is more or less for the use of warning everyone about the bad side of the PA that the government may not have wanted the public to know about. Though their evidence seems to be pathos- and logos-driven, they get the point out that the PA has many flaws that need to be fixed in a drastic way, or even drop the act all together. AIUSA also lists recommendations to act on in response to the measures that the PA takes on. One such example is “Individuals urge the US Congress to block new legislative initiatives, such as the proposed CLEAR Act and VICTORY Act, which would further curtail rights of US citizens and non-citizens.” This site is once again another excellent source of information for my research that covers the down sides to the PA and the reactions of the public to it.