Chapter 12

Political Dynamics of Framing

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On November 8, 2016, Donald Trump was elected the 45th President of the United States. This was the culmination of a long, brutal, and rather odd campaign for both Trump and his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton. Trump's campaign was surrounded by controversy since the billionaire businessman announced his candidacy promising to be tougher on illegal immigration, commenting that, "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best… they're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people."[1] Meanwhile, Clinton's campaign began amidst allegations of wrongdoing related to her use of a private email server that contained potentially-classified information.[2]

These early controversies reflect a much larger trend in the 2016 election: both candidates were surrounded by scandals throughout the campaign and both sides attempted to frame their opponent as negatively as possible using these various scandals against one another; Clinton as a criminal and Trump as a bigot. However, this "scandal" frame was not the only one available to the two candidates, nor was it the only one used. A competing, "policy" frame also entered the debate throughout the election, as Clinton and Trump's proposed policies were vastly different from one another.

Had the campaign become centered on this topic of policies and policy experience, Clinton may have greatly benefitted, as Trump had no experience as a policy maker compared to Clinton's decades of experience. Unfortunately for Clinton, this is not what happened. The dominant frame of the campaign became one of scandal and questions of

trustworthiness. And neither candidate was spared from this frame throughout the election; for example, Clinton would later become embroiled over a controversy involving her charitable organization and allegations of foreign donors having influence over her. And while Trump's controversies became more numerous as time went on, perhaps most notable was a leaked recording of the Republican nominee made crude statements about women. A content analysis of campaign coverage shows, for example, that coverage of Trump's scandals outpaced coverage of his economic positions threefold. The analogous comparison for Clinton reveals an even greater disparity with the scandal frame dominating an economic frame.[3]

This preponderance of attention on scandal in the media led to negative views of both candidates. For example, an August, 2016 poll found that 36 percent of voters viewed Clinton, and Trump, as untrustworthy.[4] Moreover, the disproportionate focus on personal traits (i.e., the scandal frame) likely favored Trump. Even though he too faced scandal criticism, he clearly had a less developed policy portfolio. The focus on personal traits also benefited Trump insofar as many saw him as the candidate of change. An August Pew poll found that 77 percent of voters believed Trump would bring about significant change if elected while Clinton was viewed as being "more of the same."[5] In short, it seems that the scandal frame, at the very least, hurt Clinton more than it hurt Trump.

Would the election have ended differently, with a Clinton victory, had policies and policy experience defined the campaign? Would voters have focused on the economy if the media and the candidates had ultimately spent more time doing so, rather than turning their attention to scandals and allegations? These questions can never be directly answered. Yet, what is clear is that how a campaign, an issue, or an event is *framed* can fundamentally change political outcomes by altering how and what people think.

In this chapter, we explore framing research with the goal of demonstrating what we do

and do not know about framing. We begin by explaining what a frame is. We provide a number of examples of how elites of various stripes engage in framing. We then turn to a discussion of how frames matter, and perhaps most importantly, *when* frames matter in altering public opinion. We conclude by emphasizing new areas of framing research, as well as some areas where more work is needed.

What Is a Frame?[6]

The term "frame" has varied meanings across disciplines, including cognitive science, economics, sociology, psychology, and more.[7] When it comes to politics, the prototypical approach distinguishes between two uses.[8] First, a frame can refer to the words, images, phrases, and presentation styles a speaker uses to relay information; these are called frames in communication.[9] The frame that the speaker chooses reveals what the speaker believes is most relevant to the topic at hand.[10] For example, a politician who emphasizes economic issues during a political campaign uses an "economy frame," suggesting economic considerations are pertinent (e.g., perhaps more relevant than foreign policy or ethical/scandal considerations). Alternatively, a policy advocate who describes universal health care as ensuring equal access for all accentuates egalitarianism rather than, for instance, the costs of coverage.

Second, a frame can refer to an individual's understanding of a given situation, or what can be called *frames in thought.* In this case, a frame is not a property of a communication, [11]but rather describes an individual's perception of a situation; the frame reveals what an individual sees as relevant to understanding a situation. For example, an individual who evaluates candidates based on their economic issue positions is said to be in an economic frame of mind.[12] A person who thinks of universal health care as a basic right for all is in an

egalitarian frame of mind.

Frames in communication and frames in thought are similar in that they both are concerned with variations in emphasis or salience. However, they differ in that the former usage focuses on what a speaker says, while the latter usage focuses on what an individual is thinking. When it comes to political framing, one can discuss the framing of an issue (e.g., welfare, affirmative action, energy policy), an event (e.g., a natural disaster, a war), or a campaign.

Frames in communication often play an important role in shaping frames in thought. This process is called a *framing effect*.[13] Framing effects matter because individuals almost always focus only on a subset of possible ways to think about an issue, event, or campaign. Thus, the frame they have in mind determines their opinions and behaviors. A voter's preference between two candidates may vary depending on whether the voter is thinking in an economic or foreign policy frame.[14] So, which frame dominates can play a big role in vote choice and ultimately election outcomes. Indeed, consider the aforementioned 2016 Presidential Election. By Election Day, it became fairly clear that a policy frame was not driving most voters' choices—if it had, perhaps Clinton would have been the victor.

Countless examples of framing effects exist: support for universal health care may hinge on whether one thinks of it in terms of egalitarianism or economic costs; an individual's attitude toward welfare recipients may depend on the extent to which one believes their plight is explained by personal failures or by social and economic disadvantages; and one's tolerance for allowing a hate group to publicly rally may hinge on the value one places on defending free speech versus maintaining public safety.[15] In all of these cases, the attitude and/or choices depends on the weights given to the competing frames.

Politicians and policy advocates regularly attempt to frame campaigns and issues to their advantage because they understand that what the public thinks influences election outcomes

and public policy.[16] Media outlets also must make choices of which frames to use when covering a story, albeit with a different motivation in mind (e.g. they wish to maximize audience shares rather than win votes). In the next section, we provide examples of elite framing (what Scheufele calls framing building).[17] We then turn to a discussion of how and when these efforts may shape opinions.

Examples of Frames in Communication

Frames come from all types of communication. Indeed, we all frame topics in our daily conversations: whenever we discuss an issue or an event, we focus on certain aspects. When it comes to politics, a variety of political actors—including politicians, the media, and lobbyists—put forth potentially influential frames.

Politicians spend considerable time determining the frames most advantageous to them.[18,19] One example of a politician's strategic framing choice comes from Druckman and Holmes' study of President Bush's 2002 State of the Union address.[20] Bush faced a fairly divided audience, whose focus had begun to shift from terrorism and homeland security to a lagging economy and the looming threat of recession. Prior to Bush's address, analysts predicted that he would focus equally on terrorism *and* the economy in reaction to this shift in public attention.[21]

The expectation that Bush would shift attention made some superficial sense, but it ignored the strategic considerations facing the President. Bush's issue-specific approval on security (roughly 86 percent) was substantially higher than on the slumping economy (roughly 31 percent).[22] By framing the country's situation in terms of terrorism and homeland security, Bush could potentially induce people to view the administration's performance in terms of its response to terror and its efforts to increase domestic security. By so doing, Bush

would then presumably lead citizens to think of him in terms of terrorism, which was to his advantage relative to if voters had focused on his economic performance.

This is exactly what Bush did; an analysis of the frames used by Bush in the State of the Union by Druckman and Holmes demonstrated that 49 percent of the discussion focused on terrorism/homeland security, while only 10 percent of the discussion focused on the economy. This effort to strategically frame the issues of the country in favor of the President's prior approval ratings had an effect on subsequent media coverage. The *New York Times* headline the day after the address stated: "Bush, Focusing on Terrorism, Says Secure U.S. Is Top Priority."[23]

The actions of President Bush are not unique to this specific president or context. Rather, additional evidence suggests that his behavior reflects a general pattern. For example, Druckman and Jacobs examine how modern Presidents attempt to influence public opinion through concerted framing efforts.[24] The authors analyzed the previously-confidential archives of three Presidents—Johnson, Nixon, and Reagan—to investigate their Administrations' utilization of their private polling data in shaping public opinion. Using data from the Nixon administration, the authors show that the president tracked the issues and traits on which the public thought most of him. Nixon then framed his statements accordingly – emphasizing issues and traits that would lead to higher evaluations for him. For example, if support for Nixon's position on a particular domestic issue (e.g., economic policy) increased by 10 percent over the overall average level of support, Nixon would then substantially increase the extent to which he talked about that issue (e.g., the economy). In essence, Nixon was framing his overall policy agenda in a way that would lead citizens to focus on those policies that made him look more favorable.

Nixon also sought to utilize this tactic in boosting citizens' perceptions of his performance attributes. For example, Nixon instructed his team to frame his "major

accomplishments: Cambodia, the Middle East, and the Vietnam Speech…. [to] get across the courage, the independence, the boldness…of the President [and allow them] to come through."[25] And these tactics were not merely some superstition on the part of Nixon and his team; in fact, Druckman and Holmes show that such foreign policy emphasis does in fact enhance impressions of the president's strength.[26] These findings show that Nixon, through private polling data, framed his statements and addresses to simulate responsiveness when, in reality, his administration was the one shaping public opinion, via framing, in response to their own data trends.

Like Presidents, congressional candidates strategically choose their frames. It is well documented that congressional incumbents—those already in office—have an electoral advantage of up to ten percentage points over their challengers.[27] This advantage stems, in part, from their experience of holding office, their familiarity with the district, and the provision of benefits to the district or state that they represent.[28] Incumbents have a strategic incentive to frame their campaigns in terms of experience, familiarity, and benefits, while their challengers will want to frame the campaign in other terms, such as issue positions, partisanship, endorsements, and polls (e.g. to show that the candidate is viable). Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin tested these expectations with data from a representative sample of U.S. House and Senate campaigns from 2002, 2004, and 2006.[29] They did content analyses of candidate websites and coded the terms candidates used to frame the campaign (i.e. the extent to which they emphasize different criteria). As expected, incumbents framed their campaigns in ways that benefit them by emphasizing experience in office, familiarity, and district ties, while challengers framed the campaign in alternative terms. The normative implications are intriguing, since campaign frames that often establish subsequent policy agendas are driven, in no small way, by strategic considerations that may bear little relationship with pressing governmental issues.[30]

The above examples focus on the framing tactics of a single elite actor without taking account of competition between elites or the role of media. There is little doubt that the Democrats emphasized the troubled economy in their public statements following Bush's 2002 State of the Union address; similarly, Nixon's opponents likely tried to shift the agenda to alternative issues that were less favorable to Nixon. These competing frames often appear when one turns to how the media cover issues and events—unlike politicians, intent on winning office, the media (even if driven to increase audience share) often aim to present a more balanced picture of different frames. To explore the extent to which competing frames are represented in news coverage of political issues, Chong and Druckman content analyzed major newspaper coverage of fourteen distinct issues over time, counting the number of frames put forth on each issue (as well as other features of the frames).[31]

Across the fourteen issues studied by Chong and Druckman, the average number of frames employed was 5.09, with the fewest frames employed in the coverage of a 1998 Ku Klux Klan rally in Tennessee and the most on the 2004 Abu Ghraib controversy (when members of the American military were reported to have abused prisoners in the Iraqi prison Abu Ghraib). Importantly, many of the frames employed on each issue came from opposing sides. For example, a frame of individual responsibility concerning Abu Ghraib suggested that fault for the incident lay with the individuals involved, whereas the administration or military commander frames put the bulk of the blame on the culture established by higher-level actors. Opposing sides simultaneously employ contrary frames that often make their way into media coverage. How individuals process these mixes of frames is the topic to which we shortly turn.

Once a set of frames are established, introducing entirely novel ones is not easy. Lobbyists often try to accomplish this in order to change the terms of the debate, but find this task to be quite challenging. For example, Baumgartner, De Boef, and Boydstun explore the

rate at which 98 issues, over a nearly two-year period, are re-framed, that is, when a wholly or partially new frame enters the conversation regarding an issue among interest-group lobbyists, media coverage, and other elite level information.[32] They report that "of the 98 issues that fell into our sample, we judged just 4 issues to have undergone some degree of re-framing over the period studied."[33] They point to several challenges of re-framing elite understandings, including limitations in resources, political constraints (e.g., political alignments), and failed lobbyist strategies. The lack of change observed by Baumgartner, et al., is consistent with macro-level studies that show "system-wide definitions of most issues remain relatively constant through time."[34] Research concerning social movements and framing also suggests that re-framing is difficult due to disagreements *within* a particular side over which frame should be adopted in the first place.[35] If an interest group or social movement that seeks to reframe an issue does not possess internal cohesion over what to reframe that issue *as*, then its ability to carry out this change will be curtailed.

The foregoing suggests a series of crucial questions left for further research: when is it advantageous for elites to attempt to re-frame an issue and how often do they have the resources necessary to do so? When elites possess both incentives and resources to re-frame an issue, are they able to accomplish their objective? Answers to these questions would help us to understand why issues are so rarely re-framed, whether because of the absence of elite incentives, shortages of resources to carry out the task, or entrenched public opinion on the issues. With these questions in mind, we next turn to a discussion of when frames do shape the opinions of ordinary citizens.

Framing Effects

Scholars demonstrate framing effects using a variety of methods, including surveys and case

studies.[36] The use of experimentation, however, has been critical for developing causal claims concerning the influence of framing on preferences. Experiments provide researchers with the ability to randomly assign participants to receive particular messages at particular points in time. This sidesteps a key limitation of observational studies—the self-selection by participants into messages for reasons that also influence how they interpret the frame. That is, individuals often choose to listen to politicians or read media reports that tend to use frames they already favor. This makes it difficult, if not impossible, to determine if the frames influence their opinions or whether the relationship between frame exposure and opinion is spurious in nature. Experimentation allows researchers to get around this problem because experiments take a group of respondents and randomly assign them to be exposed to one (or multiple) frames instead of another (or others). The random assignment means that, on average, the groups exposed to different communications will be, on average, the same save for being exposed (or not) to the frames in question. Any differences in opinion between groups can then be confidently attributed to the frames to which they were exposed. Experiments also have the advantage because the researcher knows what communications respondents received—they do not have to rely on respondents remembering what they read or heard.[37]

A framing experiment typically begins with participants randomly assigned to receive one of two alternative representations of an issue. The canonical example of this procedure comes from a study conducted by Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley on a potential rally by the Ku Klux Klan (KKK).[38] The researchers randomly provided participants with information that stressed *either* the free speech claims of the KKK, *or* the potential impact on public safety the rally would entail. We can discern a framing effect if opinions toward the rally differed significantly based on the information stressed. Just such an effect occurred; the researchers observed that individuals exposed to the free speech frame were significantly more positive

in their support for the proposed rally. In this experiment, and others of similar design, we can conclude that the framing of an issue has great consequence for the opinions individuals express.

The KKK experiment demonstrates that the manner in which elites frame an issue influences public opinion to a significant degree. More evidence for this powerful claim comes from experiments conducted by Iyengar and Kinder.[39] Participants in these experiments were randomly assigned to view edited television newscasts that contained stories on either defense spending, unemployment, or inflation. Iyengar and Kinder found that this simple difference paid great dividends in how participants evaluated the president. Participants ended up evaluating the president based on the issue upon which the newscast focused; someone who viewed a newscast that focused on defense spending, for instance, evaluated the president based on his or her views on defense spending, but not on inflation and unemployment. The content of the newscasts framed politics for participants by stressing the importance of some issues over others.

Early studies on framing provided evidence that even a small change in the framing of an issue could produce quite dramatic shifts in opinion. However, these studies did not explore three crucial aspects of the environment in which framing often occurs: (i) the *competition* between frames, (ii) the *durability* of framing effects, and (iii) the influence of *partisan polarization* on a frame's effectiveness. Recent work in each of these areas has contributed to a more nuanced understanding of framing.

Framing Competition

Citizens typically receive multiple frames concerning an issue from different sides due either to media exposure, or access to general political debate. A critical question is which of these

competing frames will win?[40] The initial foray into this question came from Sniderman and Theriault who posited that when exposed to competing frames, neither would win—people would fall back on their values.[41] They state that people are "capable of picking the side of the issue that matches their political principles when they are exposed to a full [competitive] debate."[42] They demonstrated this dynamic by presenting individuals with two competing frames presented together (e.g. an individual receives both a free speech frame and a public safety frame regarding a hate group rally), and found that framing effects largely disappeared; people instead based their decisions on if they generally cared more about free speech or public safety.[43] The authors suggest that competing frames make alternative positions equally accessible, which increases the likelihood that people will be able to identify and choose the side that is consistent with their ideological values.[44]

Not all frames are created equal, however. With this in mind, Druckman and Chong suggest that cancelling out is not the necessary outcome of frame competition.[45] Instead, it is the *stronger* frame that wins. Druckman and Chong define strength as consisting of three elements. The first is availability, which means that the individual needs to make a connection between the consideration/frame and the issue at hand for the frame to matter. In the hate group rally example, an individual must make some connection between free speech and the rally in order for the frame to be influential. The second aspect of strength is accessibility. The frame must actually come to mind as a consideration when thinking about the topic (this often comes from the frame in communication). The final facet of strength is applicability. An individual must view the consideration as compelling or persuasive for it to be considered strong. If free speech comes to mind and is connected to the issue at hand, for instance, but is not seen as an important consideration for the issue of a hate group rally, then the frame will not matter for the individual's opinion. As in much of psychology, availability is assessed by asking people what considerations come to mind, frames are made accessible

via communications (e.g., in experiments), and applicability is analyzed by asking different respondents what they think of different frames.[46] For example, how important do individuals rate free speech, public safety, town reputation, possible litter from the rally, and so on, when they think about a hate group rally. Thus, importantly, applicability is perceptual. We will return to the issue of strength in the conclusion.

As shown by a number of studies, the strength of a frame is a key consideration as to how influential it will be on an individual's ultimate opinion. To cite just one example, Druckman conducted a study of support for a publicly funded casino during the 2006 Illinois gubernatorial campaign.[47] He first pre-tested a variety of frames for strength by asking participants who did not live in Illinois (and thus were not affected by even the marginal coverage given the issue) what considerations came to mind when they thought of a state-owned casino. Then, with a distinct group of non-Illinois participants, he asked them to rate the effectiveness of various considerations in arguing for or against such a casino (he also asked whether these participants viewed each consideration as being in favor or opposed to the casino). In light of these tests, he identified two strong frames (i.e., highly available and applicable): the economic benefits (e.g., for education funds) that would come from a casino and the social costs that casinos generate (e.g., addiction, debt). Obviously, the economic frame was a pro frame and the social costs negative. He similarly identified weak frames, including a pro weak frame (i.e., people viewed it as not available and not applicable) of entertainment (i.e., casinos are a source of entertainment) and a weak con frame of morality (e.g., casinos are immoral).

Druckman then conducted a survey of a group of Illinois voters on Election Day, where he randomly exposed individuals to a host of these different mixes of frames (or to no frames whatsoever—this was a control group). Several notable results emanated from this experiment. First, Druckman found that when individuals received a single strong frame, it

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moved opinions in the expected direction (e.g. those exposed only to the strong pro-economic frame became more supportive of the casino), in line with the results of the single-frame studies described above. Second, weak frames did not influence opinions. Individuals exposed to the weak con morality frame, for instance, were no different than those exposed to no frames when it came to support for the casino. Third, opinions did not change when individuals were exposed to two strong frames from opposite sides of the political spectrum; this outcome was in line with the results reported by Sniderman and Theriault. Finally, and most importantly, frames *did not* cancel out when there was an asymmetry in terms of strength. A strong frame overwhelmed a weak one, even in conditions where respondents received a single strong frame and multiple weak ones, such that opinion moved in the direction of the strong frame. To get a sense of the size of the movement, participants exposed to a strong economic frame were 41 percent more likely to support the casino, even when they received competing weak frames pointing in the opposite direction. While the central lesson of this experiment is that frames only cancel out if both are strong, the results from this study also suggest something else of importance: repetition is not the key to success in framing, contrary to Zaller's claim that citizens "are blown about by whatever current of information manages to develop with the greatest intensity."[48] The key to a successful competitive framing strategy is strength. These results have been replicated with a host of issues including urban sprawl, a hate group rally, a Danish marriage rule, immigration, health care, and the Patriot Act.[49] Overall, the key is whether political advocates can figure out which frames are strong—indeed, in some of the aforementioned work, using weak frames is not only ineffective but sometimes backfired and pushed people in the opposite direction.[50]

Framing Durability and Media Choice

One obvious question is whether the types of framing effects we have been discussing endure or whether they are temporary blips in opinion that exist just shortly after exposure to the frame. This question has received some attention with the model being best summed up as: "When competing messages are separated by days or weeks, most individuals give disproportionate weight to the most recent communication because previous effects decay over time."[51] In short, the effects seem short-lived, which means that the frame heard most recently is the one that wins out (as long as it is a strong frame).

Framing effects, generally speaking, do not appear to be durable, and recency bias appears to be the rule. However, there is some conditionality to that finding. First, if an initial strong frame leads an individual to form a strongly held attitude, for example, their attitude toward the casino becomes very important to them, then that initial effect will last.[52] Second, if the first frame is repeated multiple times before the counter-frame is presented, then the first frame can endure.[53] Third, and most importantly, "media choice" can lead to the endurance of frames.

A reality that we thus far have ignored is that many communications do not simply appear to people from elites (or experimenters). Rather, individuals choose what to watch or read as when they choose to read one story on the Internet rather than another. This is what we mean by "media choice." In an experiment conducted by Druckman, Fein and Leeper on the subject of universal healthcare reform was the first to combine information choice and over-time framing within the same experiment.[54] The experiment in question consisted of four sessions that were completed one week apart. During the first session, participants were exposed to either a strong pro frame (i.e., healthcare will reduce inequalities), a strong con frame (i.e., it will be expensive), both, or no frame at all. The first session thus mimicked the design of prior framing studies. During the fourth session, meanwhile, the participants were exposed

either to no additional frame or to a frame opposite of the one they received in the first session; a person who received a strong pro frame (inequalities) in week one, for instance, received a strong con frame (economic costs) in week four. The key methodological innovation occurred during sessions two and three. For these sessions, a selection of participants was randomly allowed to choose from 35 different stories presented on a webpage (they were given fifteen minutes). Eight of the stories were on healthcare, with four employing a version of the pro frame and four the con frame. The other articles covered alternative political or non-political topics (the topic and direction of coverage was clear in the title that participants clicked when they wanted to read a story). The inclusion of this choice condition enabled Druckman, et al., to observe whether participants selected information based on the frame they received in the first week and, ultimately, the influence of information choice on framing effects.

Druckman and his colleagues found that allowing people to choose did matter. In fact, despite the wide range of available options, people who read a story on healthcare were then more likely to want to not only read more stories on healthcare, but also stories that employed the same frame as the initial story they read. For example, those who *first* received a frame that discussed healthcare in terms of inequality later were more likely to access healthcare stories that used that frame (e.g., rather than one that used the cost of healthcare frame). Consequently, that first frame was in essence repeated and the initial effect endured—the initial frame effect was stable and the most recent framing effect did not dominate contrary to the results reported in the previous quote that suggested recency bias. The lesson is that the longevity of frames depends on the issue and attitudes formed (e.g., are they strong) and whether people opt to then seek out additional information on the topic. Media choice matters in determining which frames win.

Aside from whether a frame persists past its initial effect, there is the question of whether

frames are capable of spreading, or "spilling over," to other, similar issues. For instance, a

story about government spending on crime, framed as a security issue, later influences

attitudes on anti-terror spending (e.g., people view anti-terror spending in terms of security,

rather than costs, because they read the security crime frame). This spillover effect occurs

because the two issues, crime and terror spending, are proximate in both their arguments and

the attitudes associated with them (i.e., someone who cares about security in their city will

likely also care about security from terrorists). However, a study by Hopkins and Mummolo

suggests the spillover potential of frames is limited to only issues that are extremely

proximate to each other, such as in the crime/terror example. For example, they find that

being exposed to a story on stimulus spending, framed around distrust in government, has

little-to-no impact on later attitudes toward spending on poverty, crime, and terror. Moreover,

this stimulus frame does not affect later attitudes on a more proximate issue like healthcare

spending, even when they share a "distrust in government" frame.[55] Thus, it is important to

remember that while there are certain conditions under which frames can become stronger, it

is highly unlikely that a frame could ever be so strong as to encompass every issue all at

once.

Partisan Polarization and Framing

A final topic of timely importance stems from the reality that many frames come from

partisan sources, that is, from Democrats or Republicans. This fact is important to consider as

the difference between the two parties has increased over the last quarter century. McCarty

states that "by almost all measures of partisan polarization, the divide between Democratic

and Republican Members of Congress have widened deeply over the past twenty-five years,

reaching levels of partisan conflict not witnessed since the 1920s."[56] How might partisan polarization affect framing?

The question of polarization's influence on framing is addressed in two experiments conducted by Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus.[57] Two issues were explored: support for oil drilling and support for the DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act, which would provide a pathway for citizenship for undocumented immigrants who entered the United States before the age of 16, graduate from high school, have good moral character and complete at least two years of college or military service. We will focus on the DREAM Act to illustrate the effects of polarization on framing, as the two experiments used the same design and the results from them were substantially similar.

There were two key dimensions in these experiments. The first dimension concerned the frames received by the experimental subjects. The participants in the study randomly received either (1) a pro strong frame (i.e., the Act will help young people by providing them with new opportunities) and a con strong frame (i.e., the Act encourages illegal immigration and over-burdens the system), (2) the aforementioned pro strong frame and a con weak frame (i.e., the Act is just politics and thus poorly designed), (3) a pro weak frame (i.e., the public supports the Act in polls) and the aforementioned con strong frame, or (4) both the aforementioned pro and strong weak frames. Weak and strong frames were determined via the pre-tests as described above. The second dimension to the experiment, meanwhile, concerned the partisan environment for the issue. In addition to the frames described above, participants randomly received (1) no party endorsements of the frame, (2) a statement that Democrats supported and Republicans opposed the Act but the parties were *not* far apart (*not overly polarized*), or (3), a statement that Democrats supported and Republicans opposed the Act but the parties *were* far apart (very *polarized*). (There also was a control condition that simply asked for support for the Act.)

The researchers found that the presence or absence of party cues, especially in a context of polarization, was an important influence on the nature of the framing effects observed. When party cues were absent, for instance, the resulting framing effects mirrored those observed in the casino study, with (1) strong cues influencing support for the DREAM Act even when pitted against a weak frame, and (2) frames of equal strength cancelling out and having no effect on subsequent opinions. In the conditions with *non-polarized* party cues, the researchers observed two key results. First, when the frames were of unequal strength (e.g., a strong pro frame and a weak con frame), frame strength drove opinions regardless of party cue. For example, when participants were told that the parties were not far apart, their resulting opinion on the issue reflecting the strong frame that they received—becoming more supportive, for instance, when they received the strong pro and weak con frame—regardless of whether they were of the same party as the one endorsing the strong frame. However, party cues did drive opinion when respondents were presented with opposing frames of equal strength. In other words, when the frames were both strong or both weak, people turned to their party for guidance. Perhaps most interesting, however, were the results from the final set of conditions where respondents received polarized party cues. In these conditions, frame strength became irrelevant and people just went along with their party's endorsed frame even if it meant following a weak frame and ignoring a strong one.

The key implication here is that partisan *intensity* matters in competitive framing settings—when parties are polarized (i.e., far apart and homogenous), they drive opinions regardless of the strength of the argument. The results suggest that a polarized political environment may actually lead citizens to hold opinions of a lower quality, ones rooted in arguments that are actually weaker than alternatives offered by the other party. This suggests that the potentially sanguine implications of the elite competition studies described above may be more limited than previously thought.

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Aside from the impact of polarization on competitive framing effects, one can also study polarization as an "electorate" frame and/or how polarization itself is framed. For example, Levendusky and Malhotra (2016) conducted a content analysis of newspaper articles covering the topic of polarization from 2000 to 2012, and found that coverage of polarization has grown substantially in that time period. These researchers then conducted an experiment that randomly assigned participants to read either a story framing the electorate as deeply polarized or a story framing the electorate as mostly moderate. Levendusky and Malhotra find compared to those exposed to the more moderate story, those exposed to the story emphasizing polarization were more likely to perceive Democrats and Republicans as being deeply polarized on a number of issues (election finance, immigration, taxation).[58]

An additional example comes from Mullinix and Robison. While Levendusky and Malhotra were interested in the amount of coverage given to elite polarization, Mullinix and Robison concentrate on *how* polarization itself is framed. For instance, in their first study Mullinix and Robison explore the role of media criticisms of elite polarization. They first show via a content analysis of news articles in the *New York Times* that media coverage of elite polarization was nearly always negative in tone, with explicit criticisms of polarization frequently voiced and calls for bi-partisanship common. Mullinix and Robison then explore whether framing polarization as a problem in this manner affected how partisans reacted to party-sourced issue frames. Much as in Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus, Mullinix and Robison found that partisans were dismissive of arguments coming from the other side when polarization was cued by itself. However, when polarization was also criticized, as it is commonly in the press, then partisans were more likely to give these arguments a fair hearing.[59] Ultimately, what both of these studies demonstrate is that framing effects are not only moderated by a polarized environment, but that the impact of polarization can be dependent on how it is framed by news media coverage.

Conclusion: Unanswered Questions

The study of framing effects has come a long way over the past decade, with various elements of the political environment added to the traditional framing experiment in an effort to produce a more "ecologically" realistic experiment. There remains, however, ample room for future investigation. We review some areas that require more study below.

What is Strength?

One obvious question is why are some frames perceived as strong and others weak. Even the large persuasion literature offers little insight: "Unhappily, this research evidence is not as illuminating as one might suppose . . . It is not yet known what it is about the 'strong arguments' . . . that makes them persuasive."[60]

One dynamic is that frames are generally stronger when they cohere with one's personal value system. For example, framing environmental issues as a "purity" problem, a framing that coheres with conservative ideology, leads to conservatives being more supportive of environmental policies they are otherwise predisposed to opposing. However, using a "harm" frame that emphasizes the potential dangers of climate change is not nearly as effective on conservatives, as that is not a value that resonates with them, in general.[61] Other research on frame strength does not paint a particularly flattering portrayal of strength perceptions. For example, Arceneaux finds that "individuals are more likely to be persuaded by political arguments that evoke cognitive biases."[62] Specifically, he reports that messages that highlight averting losses or out-group threats resonate to a greater extent than do other, ostensibly analogous arguments. Druckman and Bolsen report that adding factual information to messages does nothing to enhance their strength.[63] They focus on opinions about new

technologies, such as carbon nanotubes (CNTs). Druckman and Bolsen expose experimental participants to different mixes of frames in support and opposed to the technology. For example, a supportive frame for CNTs states: "Most agree that the most important implication of CNTs concerns how they will affect energy cost and availability." An example of an opposed frame is "Most agree that the most important implication of CNTs concerns their unknown long-run implications for human health." Druckman and Bolsen report that each of these two frames shifts opinions in the expected directions. More importantly, when factual information is added to one or both frames (in other conditions)—such as citing a specific study about energy costs (e.g., a study shows CNTS will double the efficiency of solar cells in the coming years), that information does nothing to add to the power of the frame. In short, frames with specific factual evidence are no stronger (in their effects) than analogous frames that include no such evidence. This is troubling insofar as one believes scientific evidence should be accorded greater credibility.

Otherwise, it seems as if frame strength increases with frames that highlight specific emotions, invoke threat against one's own group interests, contain some incivility, include multiple, frequently appearing, arguments, and/or have been used in the past.[64] The initial studies on frame strength make clear that one should not confound "strength" with "normative desirability." What exactly is meant by normatively desirable lies outside the purview of this chapter, but is a topic that demands careful consideration.

Continuing Changing Media Environment

Research on framing is also far from conclusive thanks to the ever-changing environments in which individuals receive their information. As individuals shifted from receiving political messages from network news to cable television, more programming options became

available and viewers who had no interest in watching political news increasingly had the option not to. A result of this growing choice was a widening gap between those with the least political knowledge and those with the most.[65] The implications of an increasing reliance on the Internet for receiving political messages have not yet been fully realized. With the Internet, information consumers can choose exactly when they receive information and they can select their own format, be it in pictures only, in streaming video, from traditional news sources who have an online presence, or from their friends and family in the form of social networking. Furthermore, the Internet allows individuals to respond to messages by commenting on stories or by engaging in dialogue. This interactive element will surely have consequences for how we interpret political messages—once dictated solely by a news source but now subject to viewer interaction.

One ongoing trend has been the growth of partisan news outlets. Many have minimized the impact of these outlets in framing debates because their audience size is relatively small.[66] Indeed, even with the cable news audience standing at just under 5 million in 2016, this audience is dwarfed by the hundreds of millions who do *not* consume cable (partisan) news.[67] Yet, the power of these partisan networks in framing may be greater than its audience. Recent research, by Druckman, Levendusky, and McLain argue this is the case because the impact of partisan networks can spread via inter-personal communication, or what is typically called a "two-step communication flow." Their study first assigned its participants to watch either some piece of partisan cable news content, or something from a non-partisan outlet. Then, the participants were assigned to groups of roughly four to six people to discuss what they watched. The authors find that after these group discussions, the political attitudes of those who did *not* consume the partisan news looked similar to those who had consumed the partisan news. For example, some of the participants watched partisan news that argued in favor of additional oil drilling, framed as an economic issue (i.e., the economic benefits of

drilling). In line with a classical framing effect, these watchers tended to adopt the economic frame and support drilling. They also then spoke with others who had not watched any partisan news or stories on drilling. Yet those non-watchers ended up being influenced (in the conversations) by the watchers and they too adopted an economic frame and become more supportive. This indicates that, through discussion, the framing effects of partisan cable news can influence the attitudes of those who do *not* directly consume that sort of news media.[68]

Where do Frames Come From?

The framing process is typically cast as one in which elite political actors—parties, candidates, and so on—actively formulate frames in competition with each other, which are then communicated to the media and, finally, to the mass public.[69] The public hears what the media reports with the media reporting what is on the government agenda, thereby implying that the process of frame construction occurs on an elite (party/candidate) to elite (media) level. A great deal of attention has been paid to the last portion of this process, the media to public aspect of framing, as evidenced by the research reviewed in this chapter. The first half, however, remains underexplored and appears to actively befuddled researchers.

How do elites choose among frames to communicate to the media? How do the media choose which to use in their coverage of an issue? Some research sheds light upon these questions. In a series of studies of elite framing concerning an immigration initiative in Switzerland, Hänggli produces evidence that the media are more likely to use frames produced by "powerful" organizations, as measured by the organization's reputation for influence, as well as the degree to which these organizations use the frame in question.[70] Powerful political actors may also have an outsized role in influencing the frames that citizens see, as evidenced by Hänggli's results and by some of Entman's work.[71] These initial

results begin to fill in the details of an important part of the framing process by suggesting an interactive process between elites over the construction and transmission of frames, although it still leaves the strategic considerations underlying this process relatively underexplored.

While some strides have been made in understanding the emergence of frames, changes to the media environment suggest that the underlying model, wherein the media largely play a role of frame transmission rather than frame creation, is in need of revision. Hänggli writes, for instance, that journalists in Western democracies abide by a "neutral informational journalistic norm," wherein they attempt to pass along the frames used in competition rather than actively participating in their construction. The evolution of blogging and the (re)emergence of partisan media, however, may very well complicate this argument and raise the specter that political elites have "lost control" over the framing process.[72] Although, during the 2016 Presidential Election, and especially so during the Republican primary, no one could question Donald Trump's ability to make news simply through tweeting something inflammatory. Those tactics earned Trump far more media coverage—about $2 billion worth—than any of his competitors, effectively allowing him to control much of the framing process surrounding the Republican primary.[73] So, it would appear that political elites have not yet lost their hold over the framing process, as it seems they may be adapting to the changing nature of the news environment.

Implications for Accountability

The evolution of research on framing has had powerful implications for notions of representation and accountability. For a long time, the study of representation assumed that mass preferences were exogenous to the activities of elites.[74] The mass public, standing to the side, forms its opinions on its own and then transmits them to elites through the various

modes of democratic action available to them. The degree of representation on offer can then be adduced by analyzing how closely aligned the communicated preferences of the mass are with the actions of elites. When this gap is wide, serious problems of representative accountability may occur.[75]

The study of framing effects greatly complicates this picture. Instead of preferences being exogenous to elite activity, elite framing strategies may greatly influence them, an argument that Druckman and Jacobs' research on Presidential framing supports.[76] And, indeed, it may be the case that our media environment, so resplendent in terms of choice, may very well be fostering this influence. Partisans have an ever-greater ability to select into one-sided, or nearly one-sided, communications, which may then motivate them to seek out only confirming evidence and counterarguments against evidence that they may be wrong. That this occurs within an environment of political polarization may only exacerbate the process insofar as it leads individuals to opt for analytically weaker arguments adopted by their party of choice. In such a world, the question of representation becomes greatly complicated—if the demands of the most active citizens, partisans, are increasingly reliant upon the frames of elites, then where does representation fit into the story?

The possibility that elite frames will come to dominate public opinion, at least for partisans, is a dire proposition, but framing effects need not only be viewed through a pessimistic lens. For one thing, framing effects are not always so threatening, as evidenced by the results from studies showing that equally strong frames on opposite sides of an issue tend to cancel out, thereby leading individuals to form opinions closer to their core values than they otherwise would. Additionally, recent research has shown that frames disseminated from political elites may be limited insofar that they do not have strong effects on people's overall policy evaluations, even if they can influence the reasons they provide for their evaluations.[77] On the other hand, framing is immensely important for the formation of public opinion.

Framing enables individuals to tame the complexity of public issues and construct meaningful opinions.

In the end, the results reported in the studies here should challenge researchers to revisit some of the standard assumptions of democratic theory and evince a greater flexibility in theory building. In the words of Schattschneider, our task is to "produce a better theory of politics," one that "gets us out of the theoretical trap created by the disparity between the demands made on the public by the common definition of democracy and the capacity of the public to meet these demands."[78]

Discussion Questions

1. What is a frame, and why is it important to understand their effects on people?

2. In a world where people are constantly bombarded with different, and often competing, frames, how can one be certain that frames have an impact on people?

3. Are frames all powerful? What are some things that can limit the strength of a frame?

4. How can frames affect people who do not consume them?

5. Over time, how effective are frames? Do their effects linger or fade away? And is there anything that can make a frame's effects hold over time?

Notes

[1] Greg Allen, "Univision Cuts Ties With Trump After Comments About Immigrants," *NPR*, June 25, 2015.
[2] Elise Labott, "Hillary Clinton to turn over private email server to Justice Department," *CNN*, August 12, 2015.
[3] Lynn Vavreck, "Why This Election Was Not About the Issues," *The New York Times*, November 23, 2016.
[4] "Clinton's Trustworthiness Remains a Drag on Her Candidacy," *Roll Call*, August 11, 2016.
[5] Doyle McManus, "Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump try to frame the election," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, August 1, 2016.
[6] Parts of this section come from James N. Druckman, "The Implications of Framing Effects for Citizen Competence," *Political Behavior* 23 (2001): 225–256.
[7] James N. Druckman, "What's It All About? Framing in Political Science," in *Perspectives on Framing,* ed. Gideon Keren (New York: Psychology Press, 2011: 279–302).
[8] Donald Kinder and Lynn Sanders, *Divided by Color: Racial Politics and Democratic Ideals* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Donald Kinder, "Communication and Opinion," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998: 173), Dietram Scheufele, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects," *Journal of Communication*

49 (1999).

[9] See, for instance, Joseph N. Cappella and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Spiral of Cynicism: The Press and the Public Good* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[10] E.g., William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani, "The Changing Culture of Affirmative Action," in *Research In Political Sociology,* ed. Richard G. Braungart. (Greenwich: JAI, 1987). 137–177

[11] Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

[12] See, for instance, William A. Gamson, *Talking Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), Dennis Chong, "How People Think, Reason, and Feel about Rights and Liberties," *American Journal of Political Science* 37 (1993): 867–899.

[13] Some scholars draw a distinction between political priming and framing, such that priming focuses explicitly on shaping the criteria on which individuals base evaluations of politicians. We see the two as conceptually indistinguishable and are treating them as such here (see Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman, "Framing Theory," *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (2007):103–126; James N. Druckman, James H. Kluklinski and Lee Sigelman, "The Unmet Potential of Interdisciplinary Research," *Political Behavior* 31 (2009): 485–510. Additionally, there is a large amount of work on another type of framing effects—called valence or equivalency framing effects. This type of effect refers to how people's preferences change due to different but factually identical descriptions of a topic (e.g., different preferences depending on whether one refers to 5 percent unemployment or 95 percent employment). For an extended treatment, see James Druckman, "What's It All About?"

[14] See James N. Enelow and Melvin J. Hinich, *The Spatial Theory of Voting* (Boston: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

[15] Shanto Iyengar, *Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[16] James N. Druckman and Lawrence Jacobs, *Who Governs?* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015).

[17] Scheufele, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects."

[18] See, for instance, George Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant!: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate: The Essential Guide for Progressives* (White River Junction: Chelsea Green, 2004); Matt Bai, "The Framing Wars," *New York Times Magazine* (July 17, 2005).

[19] There exists a virtual cottage industry in communication studies that traces the evolution of particular frames over time. While there is value in this descriptive enterprise, it provides little insight as to how or why certain frames are chosen.

[20] James N. Druckman and Justin W. Holmes, "Does Presidential Rhetoric Matter? Priming and Presidential Approval," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 34 (2004): 755–778.

[21] Druckman and Holmes, "Does Presidential Rhetoric Matter? Priming and Presidential Approval."

[22] Lydia Saad, "Bush Soars into State of the Union with Exceptional Public Backing" *The Gallup Organization, Poll Analyses* (January 29, 2002).

[23] David E. Sanger, "Bush, Focusing on Terrorism, Says Secure U.S. Top Priority," *New York Times*, January 29, 2002.

[24] James N. Druckman and Lawrence Jacobs, *Who Governs?*; see also: James N. Druckman, Lawrence R. Jacobs, and Eric Ostermeier, "Candidate Strategies to Prime Issues and Image," *Journal of Politics* 66 (2004).

[25] Excerpt from H.R. Haldeman's published Diary, 12/3/70

[26] James N. Druckman and Justin W. Holmes, "Does Presidential Rhetoric Matter? Priming and Presidential Approval," *Presidential Studies Quarterly,* 34 (2004): 755-778.

[27] Stephen Ansolabehere and James M. Snyder, Jr., "Using Term Limits to Estimate Incumbency Advantages When Officeholders Retire Strategically," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 29 (2004): 487–515.

[28] E.g. Gary Jacobson, *The Politics of Congressional Elections* (New York: Longman, 2004).

[29] Also see: "An Inside View of Congressional Campaigning on the Web," with Martin J. Kifer, Michael Parkin, and Ivonne Montes, *Journal of Political Marketing*, Forthcoming.

[30] E.g., Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Everything You Think You Know about Politics and Why You are Wrong* (New York: Basic Books, 2000: 17); James N. Druckman, Martin J. Kifer, Michael Parkin, and Ivonne Montes, "An Inside View of Congressional Campaigning on the Web," *Journal of Political Marketing* (2017).

[31] Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman, "Identifying Frames in Political News," in *Sourcebook for Political Communication Research: Methods, Measures, and Analytical Techniques*, ed. Erik P. Bucy, R. Lance Holbert (New York: Routledge, 2011). Issues included the Patriot Act, global warming, intelligent design, same-sex marriage in the United States and in Canada, social security at two points in time, the *Bush v. Gore* Supreme Court case, the Abu Ghraib controversy, an immigration initiative, a Nazi rally, two Ku Klux Klan rallies, and a proposal for a state sponsored casino.

[32] Frank Baumgartner, Suzanna L. De Boef, and Amber E. Boydstun, *The Decline of the Death Penalty and the Discovery of Innocence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[33] Baumgartner, De Boef and Boydstun, *The Decline of the Death Penalty*: 176.

[34] Dan B. Wood and Arnold Vedlitz, "Issue Definition, Information Processing, and the Politics of Global Warming," *American Journal of Political Science* 51 (2007): 552–568.

[35] For a review, see Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 611–639.

[36] See, for instance, William G. Jacoby, "Issue Framing and Public Opinion on Government Spending," *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (2000): 750–767; Paul R. Brewer, Joseph Graf, and Lars Willnat, "Priming or Framing: Media Influence on Attitudes Toward Foreign Countries," *International Journal of Communication Studies* 65 (2003): 493–508; Tobin J. Grant and Thomas J. Rudolph, "Value Conflict, Group Affect, and the Issue of Campaign Finance," *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (2003): 453–469; Stephen P. Nicholson and Robert M. Howard, "Framing Support for the Supreme Court in the Aftermath of Bush v. Gore," *Journal of Politics* 65 (2003): 676–695.

[37] See Thomas E. Nelson, Sarah M. Bryner, and Dustin M. Carnahan, "Media and Politics," in *Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*, ed. James N. Druckman, Donald P. Green, James H. Kuklinski and Arthur Lupia (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 201–213.

[38] Thomas E. Nelson, Rosalee A. Clawson and Zoe M. Oxley, "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflct and Its Effect on Tolerance," *The American Political Science Review* 91 (1997): 567–583.

[39] Iyengar and Kinder, *News That Matters*. Many refer to the work in this book as "priming" rather than "framing," but see our prior note regarding their equivalency.

[40] On the topic of elite competition and opinion formation, see E. E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960); Robert M. Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm," *Journal of Communication* 43 (1993): 51–58; William H. Riker, *The Strategy of Rhetoric: Campaigning for the American Constitution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 33; John Zaller, "The Myth of Massive Media Impact Revived: New Support for a Discredited Idea," in *Political Persuasion and Attitude Change*, ed. Diana Mutz, Richard Brody and Paul Sniderman (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 17–79.

[41] Paul Sniderman and Sean M. Theriault, "The Structure of Political Argument and the Logic of Issue Framing," in *Studies in Public Opinion*, ed. Willem E. Saris and Paul M. Sniderman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 133–165.

[42] Sniderman and Theriault, "The Structure of Political Argument."

[43] Sniderman and Theriault, "The Structure of Political Argument."

[44] Also see Paul R. Brewer and Kimberly Gross, "Values, Framing, and Citizens' Thoughts about Policy Issues: Effects on Content and Quantity," *Political Psychology* 26 (2005): 929–948; and Kasper M. Hansen, "The Sophisticated Public: The Effect of Competing Frames on Public Opinion," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30 (2007): 377–396.

[45] James Druckman and Dennis Chong, "A Theory of Framing and Opinion Formation in Competitive Elite Environments," *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007): 99 –118.

[46] Daniel O'Keefe, *Persuasion: Theory of Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002).

[47] James Druckman, "What's It All About?"

[48] John Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 311. See also: Cappella and Jamieson, *Spirals of Cynicism* and Robin L. Nabi, "Exploring the Framing Effects of Emotion: Do Discrete Emotions Differentially Influence Information Accessibility, Information Seeking and Policy Preference?" *Communication Research* 30 (2003): 225.

[49] Dennis Chong and James N Druckman, "Framing Public Opinion in Competitive Democracies," *American Political Science Review* 101 (2007): 637–655; Lene Aarøe, "Investigating Frame Strength: The Case of Episodic and Thematic Frames," *Political Communication* 28 (2011): 207–226; Else Marie Holm, *Emotions as Mediators of Framing Effects* (Arhaus: Politica, 2012); James N. Druckman, Jordan Fein and Thomas Leeper, "A Source of Bias Within Public Opinion Stability" *American Political Science Review* (forthcoming); James Druckman, "Media Effects in Politics," in *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Political Science, ed.* Rick Valelly (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[50] James N. Druckman and Kjersten Nelson, "Framing and Deliberation: How Citizens' Conversations Limit Elite Influence," *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (2003): 729–745, state that frames do not necessarily come from elites but can come from within conversations. In their experiment, they provide respondents with one of two conflicting elite frames of an issue. After receiving specific frames from political elites, respondents tend to express preferences in line with these frames. But once respondents hear about conflicting frames from other individuals in the course of a conversation, the effects of the elite frame they were exposed to disappear. Also see James Druckman, "Political Preference Formation: Competition, Deliberation, and the (Ir)relevance of Framing Effects," *American Political Science Review* 98 (2004): 671–686; and Samara Klar, "Partisanship and Preference Formation in a Social Context," working paper (2012).

[51] Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman, "Dynamic Public Opinion: Communication Effects Over Time,"

American Political Science Review 104 (2010): 663–680. Also see, David Tewksbury, Jennifer Jones, Matthew W. Peske, Ashlea Raymond, and William Vig, "The Interaction of News and Advocate Frames." *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 77 (2000): 804–829; Druckman and Nelson, "Framing and Deliberation"; Claes H. de Vreese, "The Effects of Strategic News on Political Cynicism, Issue Evaluations, and Policy Support," *Mass Communication and Society* 7 (2004): 191–214; Diana C. Mutz and Byron Reeves, "The New Videomalaise: Effects of Televised Incivility on Political Trust," *American Political Science Review* 99 (2005): 1–15; Alan S. Gerber, James G. Gimpel, Donald P. Green, and Daron R. Shaw, "How Large and Long Lasting are the Persuasive Effects of Televised Campaign Ads?," *American Political Science Review* 105 (2011): 135–150.

[52] Chong and Druckman, "Dynamic Public Opinion."

[53] See Druckman, Fein and Leeper, "A Source of Bias."

[54] Druckman, Fein, and Leeper, "A Source of Bias."

[55] Daniel J. Hopkins and Jonathan Mummolo, "Assessing the Breadth of Framing Effects" (November 1, 2016). Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2863930 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2863930

[56] Nolan McCarty, "The Policy Consequences of Partisan Polarization in the United States." Unpublished paper (2012). Also see: Nolan McCarty, Keith Poole, and Howard Rosenthal, *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006); Morris P. Fiorina and Samuel Abrams, "Political Polarization in the American Public," *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008): 563–588.

[57] James N. Druckman, Erik Peterson, Rune Slothuus, "How Elite Partisan Polarization Affects Public Opinion Formation" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April 12–15, 2012). See also Rune Slothuus and Claes H. de Vreese, "Political Parties, Motivated Reasoning, and Issue Framing Effects," *The Journal of Politics* 72 (2010): 630–645; Rune Slothuus, "When Can Political Parties Lead Public Opinion? Evidence from a Natural Experiment," *Political Communication* 27 (2010): 158–177.

[58] Matthew Levendusky and Neil Malhotra, "Does Media Coverage of Partisan Polarization Affect Political Attitudes?" *Political Communication*, 33 (2016): 283-301.

[59] Joshua Robison and Kevin J. Mullinix, "Elite Polarization and Public Opinion: How Polarization Is Communicated and Its Effects," *Political Communication*, 33 (2016): 261-282.

[60] O'Keefe, *Persuasion*: 147, 156

[61] Matthew Feinberg and Robb Willer, "The Moral Roots of Environmental Attitudes," *Psychological Science* 24 (2012): 56-62.

[62] Kevin Arceneaux, "Cognitive Bias and Strength of Political Arguments," *American Journal of Political Science* 56 (2009): 271–285.

[63] James N. Druckman and Toby Bolson, "Framing, Motivated Reasoning, and Opinions about Emerging Technologies," *Journal of Communication* 61 (2011): 659–688.

[64] Mark Allen Peterson, "Making Global News: 'Freedom of Speech' and 'Muslim Rage' in U.S. Journalism," *Contemporary Islam* 1 (2007): 247–264. Also see Samara Klar, "The Influence of Competing Identity Primes on Preference" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, March 12–15, 2012); Baumgartner, De Boef and Boydstun, *The Decline of the Death Penalty*; Jill Edy, *News and the Collective Memory of Social Unrest* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006); Diana Mutz, *In Your Face Politics: The Consequences of Uncivil Media* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).

[65] Markus Prior, "News vs. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gap in Political Knowledge and Turnout," *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (2005): 577–592.

[66] Markus Prior, "Media and Political Polarization," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 16 (2013): 101-127.

[67] Pew Research Center, "Cable News Fact Sheet," *Journalism and Media* (2017)

[68] James N. Druckman, Matthew Levendusky, Audrey McLain, "No Need to Watch: How the Effects of Partisan Media Can Spread via Interpersonal Discussions," *American Journal of Political Science,* forthcoming.

[69] See, for instance, Iyengar and Kinder, *News that Matters*; Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*.

[70] Regula Hänggli, "Key Factors in Frame Building How Strategic Political Actors Shape News Media Coverage," *American Behavioral Scientist* 56 (2012): 300–317; Regula Hänggli and Hanspeter Kriesi, "Frame Construction and Frame Promotion (Strategic Framing Choices)," *American Behavioral Scientist* 56 (2012): 260–278.

[71] Robert M. Entman, *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[72] It may important to ask whether this is a new process or simply a return to an older political equilibrium. As alluded to, the partisanship of the media has waxed and waned over time. This suggests the possibility that the elite-media-public chain may have been different in nature prior to the formulation of objective journalistic norms and that we are currently shifting back to something resembling that state of the world rather than something wholly unique. Meanwhile, work by Hans Noel, "The Coalition Merchants: The Ideological Roots of the Civil Rights Realignment," *The Journal of Politics* 74 (2012): 156–173, suggests that members of the public

intellectual class, including the media, have long played a role in influencing party ideology and, through this mechanism, the frames party elites have chosen to use (although Noel does not pitch his work as about framing). The process identified by Noel, however, was of a lagged nature, with the construction of ideology by non-party authors only followed by party adoption a few decades later as young party activists matured and came to institutional power. What may have changed, however, is the *speed* of this process, with the ideology construction and transmission process occurring not over twenty-five years, say, but over five due to the increased rapidity that our modern media environment allows.

[73] Nicholas Confessore and Karen Yourish, "$2 Billion Worth of Free Media for Donald Trump," *The New York Times*, March 15, 2016.

[74] See Lisa Disch, "The Impurity of Representation and the Vitality of Democracy," *Cultural Studies* 26 (2012): 207–222.

[75] For a critique of this model see James H. Kuklinski and Gary M. Segura, "Endogeneity, Exogeneity, Time, and Space in Political Representation," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 20 (1995): 3–21; Patricia Hurley and Kim Quaile Hill, "Beyond the Demand Input Model: A Theory of Representation Linkages," *The Journal of Politics* 65 (2003): 304–326.

[76] James N. Druckman and Lawrence Jacobs, *Who Governs?*

[77] Daniel J. Hopkins, "The Exaggerated Life of Death Panels? The Limited but Real Influence of Elite Rhetoric in the 2009–2010 Health Care Debate," *Political Behavior*, forthcoming.

[78] Schattschneider, *The Semi-Sovereign People*.