

The Sourcebook for Political Communication Research

Methods, Measures, and Analytical Techniques

Edited by Erik P. Bucy and R. Lance Holbert

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**THE SOURCEBOOK FOR
POLITICAL COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

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Edited by

Erik P. Bucy
Indiana University

R. Lance Holbert
The Ohio State University

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Identifying Frames in Political News

Dennis Chong

Department of Political Science
Northwestern University

James N. Druckman

Department of Political Science
Northwestern University

In a democracy, a strong and independent public voice depends on the existence of a free media that represents the diversity of viewpoints in society. Citizens learn about politics through personal experiences and conversations with others, but most of what happens in the world is viewed indirectly through the reporting of the mass media. More than any other source of communication, the news media shape the considerations that people use to understand and evaluate political events and conditions (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987).

The study of public opinion, therefore, is linked inextricably to analyzing how the news media frame their coverage of politics and how the public uses this information. A media frame is an interpretation or evaluation of an issue, event, or person that emphasizes certain of its features or consequences. Scholars have examined the mass media's treatment of issues and candidates and shown that public opinion can shift as the balance of stories changes to favor one side or the other (e.g., Chong & Druckman, 2007c). If one side dominates public discussion of a subject, its framing of the issue will shape public opinion.

Consider, for example, two of the most significant domestic and foreign policies of the George W. Bush administration: the tax cuts of 2001 and 2003, and the decision to go to war in Iraq in 2003. On both issues, the administration influenced the media's framing of its news coverage, leading to increased public support for the administration's policies. Public discussion of the tax cuts in the media emphasized the savings that would accrue to taxpayers while ignoring the likely negative consequences for government spending on social programs (Bartels, 2005; Hacker & Piereson, 2005). The administration built support through the media for invading Iraq by linking the regime of Saddam Hussein to the events of 9/11 and making the invasion an integral part of its larger war on terror (Gershkoff & Kushner, 2005). Therefore, despite the substantial impact that each of these policies has had on the American public, debate over their merits was surprisingly skewed.

In this chapter, we describe and apply methods for analyzing how information and arguments are framed in media coverage of political news. Our focus is on frames in the news rather than frame-building or frame-setting processes (see de Vreese, 2005; Scheufele, 1999). We begin by defining the meaning of "frames" and linking "framing" to the psychology of attitudes. After describing an approach to identifying frames in the mass media, we outline a theory of how such frames influence popular interpretations of politics. In contrast to the focus of most prior work, which emphasizes the frequency with which frames are used, a novel feature of our theory is its identification of contextual features of frames that are predicted to affect opinions. We illustrate how these details of frames can be identified in a content analysis of fourteen distinct national, state, and local issues, examined over time. The results of our analysis highlight the usefulness of taking a longitudinal approach to studying the frequency, balance, and interaction of frames.

WHAT IS FRAMING?¹

The major premise of framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from multiple perspectives and evaluated on different bases, not all of which will yield the same attitude toward the issue. Framing refers to a process by which citizens learn to construe and evaluate an issue by focusing on certain "frames"—i.e., certain features and implications of the issue—rather than others. In this chapter, we will focus on the media's role in influencing the frames that citizens use to evaluate political issues that are discussed and debated in the news.

A more precise definition of framing starts with a conventional expectancy value model of an individual's attitude (e.g., Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997). An attitude toward an object, in this view, is the weighted sum of a series of evaluative beliefs about that object. Specifically, $Attitude = \sum v_i * w_i$ where v_i is the evaluation of the object on attribute i , and w_i is the salience weight ($\sum w_i = 1$) associated with that attribute.

For example, one's overall attitude, A , toward a tax cut might consist of a combination of negative and positive evaluations, v_i of the policy on different dimensions i . An individual may believe that the tax cut will have favorable implications for her pocketbook ($i = 1$) but also cause the elimination of various social programs ($i = 2$). If she values both her financial status and these social programs, then v_1 is positive and v_2 is negative and her attitude toward the tax cut will depend on the relative magnitudes of v_1 and v_2 discounted by the relative weights (w_1 and w_2) assigned to each attribute, respectively (Nelson & Oxley, 1999).

The conventional expectancy model is an idealized conception of an attitude as a summary of a definable set of beliefs that an individual holds about an object. Nonetheless, the expectancy value model's general assumption that different emphases can be placed on various considerations about the object is a useful abstraction for discussing the psychology of framing.² The set of dimensions that affect an evaluation constitute an individual's "frame in thought." For example, if one believes that free speech dominates all other considerations in deciding whether a hate group has the right to rally, that person's frame in thought is free speech. If, instead, one gives consideration to free speech, public safety, and the effect of the rally on the community's reputation, then one's frame in thought consists of this mix of considerations.

Obviously, an individual's frame in thought can have a marked impact on her overall opinion (e.g., a free speech frame inclines one to support the group's right to rally). For this reason, political elites attempt to mobilize voters in support of their policies by encouraging them to think about those policies along particular lines. This is accomplished by highlighting or repeatedly mentioning certain features of the policy, such as its likely effects or its relationship to important values (e.g., Jacoby, 2000, p. 751). In so doing, the speaker invokes a "frame in communication"

that is a candidate for adoption by others (on the distinction between frames in thought and frames in communication, also see Brewer, 2003; Druckman, 2001; Kinder & Sanders, 1996; Scheufele, 1999). When, for example, a speaker argues that a hate group's planned rally is "a First Amendment issue," she makes a case for the relevance of free speech (this is a frame in communication because it is part of a speech act). Standardized guidelines on how to identify (or even define more precisely) a frame in communication do not exist. In the next section, we review previous work on identifying frames in communication, and we put forth an inductive approach to gathering data.

IDENTIFYING FRAMES IN COMMUNICATION

Over the past decade, the identification of frames in communication—that is, the key considerations emphasized in a media message—has become a virtual cottage industry. Scholars track frames to identify trends in issue definitions, compare coverage across media outlets, and examine variations across different types of media (e.g., Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). While uniform measurement standards are not available, the most compelling studies tend to take the following steps to identify frames (see, e.g., Boydston, 2006; de Vreese, 2004; Gamson & Modigliani, 1987, p. 143, 1989; Shah, Watts, Domke, & Fan, 2002, p. 343; Tuchman, 1978, p. 193).

First, an issue, person, or event is selected (Entman, 2004, pp. 23–24). A frame in communication can be defined only in relation to a specific issue, event, or political actor. For example, the frames for Social Security reform differ from the frames for immigration reform. Even the same issue at different times may invoke alternative frames; as we show below, the frames used in media coverage of Social Security reform in 1997–2000 tended to be more positive than those invoked in 2003–2005. Also the frames appeared with varying frequencies in these two time periods with, for example, the "outcome" frame appearing significantly more often in the second time period.

Second, if the goal is to understand how frames in communication affect public opinion, then the researcher needs to isolate a specific attitude. For example, one could focus on overall attitudes toward welfare reform or, alternatively, on attributions of reasons why people are on welfare. Different frames may underlie each of these attitudes. The frame-defining attitudes toward welfare reform may include considerations of economic costs, humanitarianism, and individualism (Feldman & Zaller, 1992). Causal attributions relevant to welfare might employ an episodic frame, such as an individual's work ethic, or a thematic frame, such as the economic opportunities available in society (Iyengar, 1991).³

Third, an initial set of frames for an issue is identified inductively to create a coding scheme. Prior work in the academic and popular literatures serves as a good starting point; for example, the book, *Framing the Social Security Debate* (Arnold, Graetz, & Munnell, 1998), would be an obvious source for gathering contemporary Social Security frames. Gamson and Modigliani (1987, p. 144; 1989, p. 7) suggest going further by examining the frames produced by various elite actors and organizations on both sides of the issue in court opinions and briefs, editorial writings, and the publications of interest groups or social movements (also see Brewer, 2003). Such in-depth analysis provides the set of "culturally available frames" in elite discourse (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987, p. 144). Elite sources can be complemented by asking samples of individuals to record the considerations that come to mind on a given issue, using open-ended questions (see Chong & Druckman, 2007b, for a discussion).

Fourth, once an initial set of frames is identified, the next step is to select sources for content analysis. These might include communications that advocate particular positions (e.g.,

communications from social movements) but more typically scholars analyze mass media sources, including major newspapers, magazines, websites, or television broadcasts (although see Tewksbury, Jones, Peske, Raymond, & Vig, 2000). The choice of specific news outlets depends on the researcher's intent; for example, the goal of a study might be to capture general trends in coverage, or to compare specific types of coverage across media. Articles or stories are identified via searches (such as keyword searches in electronic databases) (cf. Dimitrova, Kaid, Williams, & Trammell, 2005; Tankard, 2001, p. 101). Coders then analyze a sample, identifying the presence or absence of predefined frames in the story or article. Coders can also separately analyze distinct parts of the article, such as headlines, photos, and informative graphics (de Vreese, 2004, p. 54).

Prior to coding, it is necessary to specify how any particular frame can be identified. When researchers rely on computerized searches to analyze large volumes of text, they must identify the universe of words that mark the presence of a frame. For example, in his study of public attitudes toward governmental efforts to promote racial equality, Kellstedt (2000, 2003) tracked the use of two media frames over time: individualism and egalitarianism. He created a dictionary of words and phrases that indicated the presence of each of these broad, thematic frames (e.g., mentions of "fairness" and "equal protection of the laws" denoted the egalitarianism frame) and then used content analysis software to analyze more than 4,000 *Newsweek* articles and 2,500 *New York Times* articles. Shah et al. (2002) used a similar approach to examine how the Clinton–Lewinsky scandal was framed in nearly 20,000 news articles (for another computer-based approach, see Simon & Xenos, 2004).

In contrast to machine coding, manual or human coding guided by prototypes instead of exact terminology allows greater flexibility to discover new frames that were not identified in the initial coding scheme. This added flexibility, however, comes with a potential cost of lower reliability and smaller samples. In general, checks for intercoder reliability are imperative when manual coding is used (for a mixed hand-computer coding method, see Hopkins & King, 2007; see also Chapters 12 and 14, this volume).

There are copious examples of research on frames in communication using approaches similar to those outlined above, including analyses of affirmative action (e.g., Gamson & Modigliani, 1987), support for war (e.g., Dimitrova et al., 2005), opinions about stem cell research (Nisbet, Brossard, & Kroepsch, 2003, p. 48), cynicism toward government (Brewer & Sigelman, 2002), and attributions of responsibility for the obesity epidemic (Lawrence, 2004).

These framing analyses provide insight into cultural shifts (Richardson & Lancendorfer, 2004, p. 75; Schudson, 1995), media biases (Entman, 2007; Tankard, 2001), public understanding (Berinsky & Kinder, 2006), and opinion formation (Chong & Druckman, 2007c). They also demonstrate that framing is best conceptualized as a process that evolves over time. The passage of time allows new issues to be separated from previously debated issues that are familiar to those who pay attention to politics. Although new issues are often variants of existing issues that have been in the news, they are distinguished by the absence of general agreement among elites and the public about how to construe them. Older issues, by contrast, have a defined structure and elicit more routine considerations.

EFFECTS OF FRAMES IN COMMUNICATION

Frames in communication matter—they affect the attitudes and behaviors of their audiences (Druckman, 2001). The bulk of attention in the political science and communication literatures has been on how frames in the communications of elites (e.g., politicians, media outlets, interest

groups) influence citizens' frames and attitudes. This process is typically called a "framing effect."⁴

Scholars have demonstrated framing effects with experiments, surveys, and case studies across a range of issues, including government spending (Jacoby, 2000), campaign finance (Grant & Rudolph, 2003), support for the Supreme Court (Nicholson & Howard, 2003), evaluations of foreign nations (Brewer, Graf, & Willnat, 2003), and many others. In these cases, a journalist, politician, or commentator may introduce a frame in communication (e.g., representing a hate group rally as a free speech issue) that increases the weight (w) an individual attaches to a certain dimension or consideration (i) (e.g., free speech considerations), thereby shaping the person's overall opinion (e.g., increasing support for the right to rally).

In other work, we suggest a three-step process of the psychological mechanisms of framing (Chong & Druckman, 2007a). First, a given consideration—say free speech in the evaluation of a hate group's right to rally—needs to be stored in memory to be *available* for retrieval and use. If, for example, an individual does not understand the concept of free speech, then free speech is not an available consideration, and she will be unaffected by a free speech frame. Second, the consideration must be *accessible* (Price & Tewksbury, 1997), meaning its activation potential exceeds a certain threshold level, above which knowledge is available for use (e.g., the consideration may be retrieved from long-term memory). One way to increase accessibility of a consideration is through frequent or recent exposure to a communication frame that emphasizes it.

Third, under some conditions, an individual will consciously evaluate the *applicability* of accessible considerations.⁵ The perceived applicability of a given communication frame (and thus the likelihood it will affect an individual's opinion) increases with perceptions of its strength or relevance (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 330). Strength or relevance, in turn, depends on *semantic and rhetorical features of the frame* such as whether the frame is culturally resonant, is refuted, includes statistical information (i.e., the explicit citation of a statistic, such as the percentage of people favoring the privatization of Social Security), includes episodic information (i.e., reference to a particular case or person as an example, such as a story of someone who relies on Social Security), is endorsed by a credible source, and so on. An implication of these effects—supported by experimental evidence (Chong & Druckman, 2007b)—is that the volume or frequency of messages is not the only factor affecting public opinion. Under competitive circumstances, applicable or strong frames can defeat frames that are more prevalent (i.e., available and accessible) but less applicable or weaker.

Evaluations of the applicability of a frame also depend critically on the *mix of frames* an individual encounters. For example, opposing strong frames may offset the effects of one another; alternatively, weak frames may backfire when countered by strong opposing frames if the strong frames accentuate the inapplicability of the weak frames (see Chong & Druckman, 2007a, 2007b). In short, it is necessary to account for the relative strength and frequency of each side's frames to gauge framing effects in competitive political environments.

When encountering a series of frames over time (Chong & Druckman, in press), the order of the frames influences the magnitude of framing effects, but individuals vary in the degree to which they favor either earlier or later arguments. Individuals who process information online, by using a running tally that is updated following exposure to each piece of information, show stronger primacy effects; in other words, their opinions correspond more closely to the *early* frames they encounter. Individuals who rely more heavily on memory-based information processing are affected to a greater degree by recent frames because they base their opinions more on immediate considerations. This finding accentuates the importance of understanding more generally how frames are represented over time in media coverage—something largely ignored in the literature (exceptions include de Vreese, 2004; Druckman & Nelson, 2003; Tewksbury et al., 2000).

THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS OF MEDIA CONTENT ANALYSIS

Past work analyzing frames in media content concentrates attention almost exclusively on the prevalence of frames as the vehicle of framing effects. It does this by recording whether a frame is present or absent in an article and then reporting frequencies with which different frames appear, sometimes charting frequencies over time (e.g., de Vreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001; Edy & Meirick, 2007; Gamson & Modigliani 1987, 1989; Gross & Goldman, 2005; Kellstedt, 2005; Miller & Riechert, 2001; Porto, 2007; Schnell & Callaghan, 2005; Schuck & de Vreese, 2006).⁶

The focus on frequency stems from assumptions common in the literature. For example, Zaller's (1992) RAS (Receive-Accept-Sample) model suggests that the considerations a person holds about an issue depend on the volume of messages received and accepted on either side. Few dimensions of these messages are considered relevant; only their direction and whether they provide partisan or ideological cues to the audience are considered. Politically sophisticated individuals are more likely to accept frames from partisan sources, but public opinion in general responds primarily to the relative intensity of opposing messages.⁷ Simply put, prevalent frames prevail, as citizens "are blown about by whatever current of information manages to develop with greatest intensity" (Zaller, 1992, p. 311; see also, Cappella & Jamieson, 1997, pp. 81–82; Domke, Shah, & Wackman, 1998, p. 53; Iyengar, 1991, pp. 130–136; Pan & Kosicki, 1997, pp. 9–11; Riker, 1990, p. 49).

The framing theory described above suggests that framing depends on factors other than the intensity or volume of messages, which tends to affect the availability and accessibility of relevant considerations. Framing effects also depend on the relative applicability or strength of frames, the combination of frames encountered (which may or may not be balanced), and the sequence of frames over time. Experimental research confirms these factors are relevant (Chong & Druckman, 2007b), but this research has been limited by designs that test only a few simple competitive contexts (e.g., one-sided framing, dual framing, balanced debate).

In practice, competition between frames can take many alternative forms, particularly on issues that are debated over extended periods. Current experimental studies typically employ only one or two frames to represent media coverage of an issue when in practice there are likely to be multiple competing and complementary frames. Future research on the effects of different forms of competition therefore would benefit from empirical studies evaluating how frames are represented in actual media coverage of salient political issues. This is the task we set for ourselves in the remainder of the chapter. Using the content analysis methodology outlined earlier, we will code how a variety of national, state, and local political issues have been framed in the news media. We will calculate the frequency with which different frames appear in news stories and the prevalence of debate involving opposing frames. We will note when frames are refuted and when they employ statistical or episodic information, as these features may be related to the applicability of a frame. Because media coverage of each issue is extended over time, we also will examine changes in the number, balance, and presentation of frames. We expect to find that, in contrast to the usual simplified design of framing experiments, real-world debate will involve numerous frames representing both sides of the issues and that competition between opposing positions will be commonplace but rarely balanced.

ANALYZING COMPETING FRAMES

Selecting Issues and Attitudes

Moving beyond coverage of a single issue to studying how news media cover political issues generally presents the additional methodological problem of deciding which issues to select for

analysis. When there is no well-defined population of issues from which to draw a representative sample, it is unclear whether the concept of a sampling frame is meaningful (i.e., what constitutes the universe of media-covered issues?). Perhaps the closest analogy is selecting a small-*N* data sample from a large, incompletely specified population.

An alternative to drawing a representative sample when the population is vaguely defined is to select a set of issues that vary in some specific, identifiable respects. Political issues vary first and foremost in their substance or content: foreign versus domestic policy, social or cultural (including race and religion) versus economic concerns, and so on. Party platforms are readily located along these broad dimensions, as are the attitudes of voting groups in the electorate (Carmines & Layman, 1997). Individual attitudes within a given policy domain also are likely to display enough consistency to indicate that such subdivisions of the "issue space" are meaningful to politicians and voters alike.

As noted earlier, issues also vary in their age or political longevity. Health care and Social Security, for example, have been debated continually in recent decades, whereas controversy over permissible methods for interrogating terrorism suspects is a relatively new topic of public debate. However, the distinction between old and new is often fuzzy. Conflicts over the place of religion in the education system, for example, have focused at different times on school prayer, the reading of the Bible, the posting of the Ten Commandments in classrooms, and the teaching of evolution, among other controversies. The latest iteration of debate on this issue (e.g., intelligent design) may introduce new tactics and arguments but is also likely to resurrect familiar claims that reflect longstanding cleavages in society.

Many ostensibly new issues are new only in their latest manifestation, whereas enduring issues are frequently updated or refitted with new considerations. Traditional issues can therefore potentially be transformed into "new" issues by reframing. In the 1980s and 1990s, for example, proponents of hate speech regulations on college campuses made considerable headway by drawing a parallel between racial harassment in the university and sexual harassment in the workplace (Chong, 2006). By arguing that hate speech was not a traditional First Amendment concern, they shifted the value dimension of the issue and reframed the debate in terms of whether hate speech violated the civil rights of women and racial and ethnic minorities (Delgado, 1982, 1991; MacKinnon, 1993; Matsuda, 1989).

The rationale behind separating new and enduring issues is that attitudes toward new issues tend to be weaker and, therefore, individuals should be more susceptible to persuasion and framing effects on these issues. In this sense, the key distinction across issues is the relative difficulty or ease with which citizens can relate the issue to their existing attitudes and beliefs.

Issues also vary in their salience to the public. The more salient an issue is, the more likely citizens will know something about the issue, hold prior opinions related to it, and be motivated to evaluate new information about the issue. Knowledge, prior attitudes, and motivation are all expected to influence how people process information about issues (Chong & Druckman, 2007a).

For our analyses here, we define salience on the basis of substantive media coverage. Although the volume of media attention does not necessarily mean that an issue will become personally important to any individual citizen, it increases the likelihood of issue awareness and exposure to information about the issue that can affect one's opinions and attitudes.

The set of issues we analyze (see Table 13.1) have enjoyed varying durations on the public agenda (i.e., they vary in terms of age) and include both issues that fall clearly within one substantive domain and others that cut across domains (i.e., they vary in terms of content). The ongoing discussion of ways to shore up the Social Security program falls squarely in the economic realm and has been a subject of debate for a relatively long period of time (at least periodically). The debate over gay marriage and the teaching of evolution and intelligent design are prominent

TABLE 13.1
Coding Details

Issue or Event	Attitude	Time Period	Rationale for Time Period	Source	Keywords	Number of Articles Coded
Patriot Act	Support (pro) or oppose (con) the Patriot Act and its restrictions	9/12/01–12/31/05	Debate about security restrictions began immediately after 9/11/01.	New York Times	"Patriot Act" IN "headline," OR "lead paragraph," OR "terms"	122
Global warming	Support or oppose efforts to control global warming (e.g., Kyoto Accord)	1/1/00–12/31/04	The Kyoto Accord was agreed upon in 12/97 and entered force in 2/05. This is an ongoing issue, and we focus our analysis on the Bush administration, which, during the period coded, opposed global efforts including the accord.	New York Times	"Global warming" OR "Kyoto Treaty" IN "headline"	82
Intelligent design	Support or oppose intelligent design as a viable alternative to evolution (and its teaching in schools)	11/1/04–12/31/05	The most recent debate traces its origins to a campaign launched by the Discovery Institute starting in 1990 (see <i>New York Times</i> 8/05 series). It took several years, however, for the Institute to generate a public debate which began in earnest in early spring of 2005 (<i>New York Times</i>) with numerous school boards taking up the issue. ^a	New York Times	"intelligent design" AND "evolution" IN "headline," "lead paragraph," OR "terms"	58
Same-sex marriage in the U.S.	Support or oppose the right to same-sex marriage (and constitutional amendments pertaining to it)	8/1/03–12/31/05	The Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled on the issue in 11/03 (and then again on 2/3/04). ^b	New York Times	"Gay marriage" OR "same-sex marriage" OR "civil union" IN "headline" OR "lead paragraph" OR "terms" AND "constitutional amendment" IN "full text"	139
Same-sex marriage in Canada	Support or oppose the right to same-sex marriage in Canada	8/1/03–12/31/05	We used the same time period as in the U.S. for a point of comparison. During this time period, the issue received extensive coverage in Canada. Numerous provinces legalized gay marriage and, on 12/9/04, the Supreme court of Canada ruled that same-sex marriage is constitutional (and on 6/20/04, the Civil Marriage Act legalized same-sex marriage through Canada).	Globe and Mail	"gay marriage" OR "same-sex marriage" OR "civil union" IN "headline/lead paragraph"	139

TABLE 13.1 continued
Coding Details

Issue or Event Coded	Attitude	Time Period	Rationale for Time Period	Source	Keywords	Number of Articles
Social Security 1	Support or oppose privatization or radical change/reform	6/1/97- 6/31/00	Cook (2005) suggests that key years over two presidential terms were 1998 and 1999 (starting with Clinton's 1997 reform proposals) and 2004-2005 (once Bush won his second term and began pushing for privatization).	New York Times	"Social security" IN "headline" AND "reform" OR "overhaul" OR "privatization" IN "full text"	40
Social Security 2	Support or oppose privatization or radical change/reform	1/1/04- 12/31/05	See Social Security 1 rationale.	New York Times	"Social security" IN "headline" AND "reform" OR "overhaul" OR "privatization" IN "full text"	92
Bush v. Gore	Support or challenge the Election Day election outcome (favoring Bush)	11/9/00- 12/13/00	This began the day after the 2000 election and continued until the final Court decision.	New York Times	"Bush" AND "Gore" AND "Recount AND "Ballot" IN "headline" OR "lead paragraph" OR "terms"	134
Abu Ghraib controversy	Support or criticize the administration, government, and/or military (attributions)	3/20/04- 9/30/04	Charges of alleged abuse were made on 3/20/04. Media coverage and discussion began with the publication of photos on 4/28/04. Coverage subsided by fall of 2004, with the trials ongoing.	New York Times	"Abu Ghraib AND abuse OR torture" IN "Headline, Lead Paragraph, Terms"	159
California immigration initiative (Prop. 187)	Support or oppose Proposition 187, which would bar illegal immigrants from receiving various basic public services	11/1/93- 12/31/98	Efforts to put the initiative on the 1994 ballot began in late 1993. Debate persisted after the initiative passed due to court appeals. Most of the coverage subsided by 1997.	San Francisco Chronicle	"187" AND "immigration" IN "Headline, Lead Paragraph, or Terms"	80
Nazi rally	Support or oppose the right of a hate group rally	1/1/78- 12/31/78	Time period covers debate before and after 7/9/78 march at Marquette Park, Chicago.	Chicago Tribune	"Nazi" AND "rally" AND "Marquette park" OR "Skokie"	36
Penn. Ku Klux Klan rally	Support or oppose the right of a hate group rally	8/1/01- 9/31/01	Time period covers debate before and after aborted 9/8/01 rally in Lancaster.	Lancaster New Era	"Ku Klux Klan" IN "Headline/Lead Paragraph/Terms"	23
Tenn. Ku Klux Klan rally	Support or oppose the right of a hate group rally	1/1/98- 2/28/98	Time period covers debate before and after 1/17/98 rally in Memphis.	The Commercial Appeal	"Ku Klux Klan" IN "Headline/Lead Paragraph/Terms"	29
2006 casino proposal in Illinois	Support or oppose the proposal for a state owned casino	8/24/06- 11/7/06 (Election Day)	The proposal was put forward by candidate Topinka on 8/23/06 as a major part of her campaign agenda. Our ending time constitutes the end of the campaign.	Chicago Tribune	"gubernatorial," "Topinka," and/or "Blagojevich," AND "Casino"	20

Notes:

^a There is a long history dating at least to the 1925 Scopes trial and the 1982 *McClellan v. Arkansas Board of Education* decision. The idea of intelligent design was first introduced in 1802 (Morowitz, Hazen, & Trefil, 2005, p. B7).

^b The issue remained contentious through the 2004 election and after, as groups continued to organize to place ballot initiatives on the issue before voters.

examples of social or cultural issues; both of these issues can be best seen as relatively new in terms of specifics but quite similar to other issues that have generated debate for years. The discussion of global warming in the context of the Kyoto Treaty combines elements of foreign policy with domestic economic considerations. This is a topic that has become increasingly prominent in recent years.

Another increasingly controversial issue is immigration; we follow media reporting on immigration at the national level and coverage at the state level on Proposition 187 in California. Immigration is a multidimensional issue that can be framed in racial or economic terms while it also introduces considerations of security and civil rights. The Patriot Act is a new issue that poses old questions about civil liberties and the tradeoffs between individual liberty and security. The same civil liberties and human rights considerations are raised in the Abu Ghraib controversy involving the abuse of foreign prisoners by American soldiers. The unique *Bush v. Gore* controversy in the 2000 presidential election raised issues of voting rights and electoral laws that were intensely debated but quickly resolved. For added variation, we also coded coverage of proposed hate group rallies in three distinct locations at three different points in time, as well as a short-lived proposal for a publicly funded casino that received attention during the 2006 gubernatorial campaign in Illinois.

Selecting Time Periods

Given our focus on *salient* issues, we chose a timeframe for each issue in which there was active debate or discussion of the issue in the news, usually stimulated by an event such as a policy proposal, election, or change of policy that brought attention to the issue and prompted news coverage. In Downsian (1972) terms, we examined roughly the middle phases of the issue-attention cycle between discovery, enthusiastic discussion, and gradual subsiding of public interest. These are the periods when public opinion is most likely to be affected by media framing of the issue.

In most instances we used a focal event to center the time frame of the content analysis. We set the starting point for our analysis a few months prior to the event and continued the analysis for a few months afterward to monitor changes in coverage over the course of this peak period of attention.

For each issue, we identified the public attitude (pro or con) that was most clearly affected by media coverage of the issue. The relevant attitudes corresponding to these issues appear in the second column of Table 13.1. Notice that each attitude has a *pro* position—generally supportive of the issue—and a *con* position that opposes it (e.g., opposition to the Patriot Act, Kyoto Accord, intelligent design, same-sex marriage, or Social Security privatization).

All coding, with the exception of the 2006 casino proposal, was completed by December 2005, so we do not examine media coverage beyond that period. The specific time periods for each issue are listed in the third column of Table 13.1. The fourth column of the table offers more detailed rationales for the time periods. We code Social Security during two distinct time periods when it received considerable attention (i.e., 1997–2000 and 2004–2005), thereby allowing for comparative analyses. We also code three proposed hate group rallies, allowing for comparison across these cases.

Selecting Sources and Articles

The aim of our study is to capture and explain how information about political issues is represented to mass audiences. Although people can obtain information on issues from a variety

of sources (e.g., friends, Internet sites, talk shows, magazines), television and newspapers continue to be the primary sources through which individuals receive information (e.g., Fridkin & Kenney, 2005). Therefore, we concentrate our analysis on the information that is available through the mass media. This approach follows others who analyze how issues are framed (e.g., Entman, 2004; Gilens, 1999; Gross & Goldman, 2005; Jerit, 2008; Jones & Baumgartner, 2005; Kellstedt, 2003; Patterson, 1993).⁸

In terms of specific sources, past work has analyzed a variety of sources, including news-magazines such as *Newsweek* (Gilens, 1999; Kellstedt, 2000, 2003), television news transcripts (Entman, 2004), the AP wire (Jerit, 2008), the *New York Times* (Baumgartner, De Boef, & Boydston, 2008; Boydston, 2006; Jones & Baumgartner, 2005; Patterson, 1993), and other newspapers (Gross & Goldman, 2005).⁹ For national level issues, we examine the *New York Times*, often regarded as the national newspaper of record in the United States and an agenda-setter for other newspapers and mass media. For the local issues—hate group rallies, Proposition 187, and the casino proposal—we analyzed relevant local papers.¹⁰ We also include an analysis of the same-sex marriage issue in Canada using the major national Canadian paper, the *Globe and Mail*. Coding the *Globe and Mail's* treatment of same-sex marriage offers an interesting cross-national comparison with coverage of the same issue in the *New York Times*. The specific sources used for each issue are listed in the fifth column of Table 13.1.

Articles for each issue were drawn from the Lexis/Nexis database; Factiva or ProQuest was used for supplemental searches on some local issues when local newspapers were only available through these databases. On each issue, the optimal set of keywords was determined by experimenting with alternative word combinations and locations (e.g., in the headline or lead paragraph of the article) and reading a sample of articles generated by each combination to ensure that all major articles were captured. The keywords used for each issue are listed in the sixth column of Table 13.1.

A simple count of the number of articles published in each month during the interval studied confirms that media attention to each issue increased and, in some cases, declined toward the end of our coding period. Therefore, the analysis tracks how the issue is discussed in the media as it becomes more salient to the public.

In cases where our search procedure resulted in more articles than we could feasibly code,¹¹ a random sample of articles was drawn from the total population of articles without regard for their placement in the paper.

In terms of visual content, photographs accompanying the articles were not coded because they could not be obtained from the search engines used to sample relevant articles. (Coding photographs would have required a painstaking manual search through microfilm.) The inaccessibility of photographs is a drawback insofar as pictures may reinforce or contradict the text (Messaris & Abraham, 2001). Visual frames also may have effects that are distinct from the text, which will not be captured in our coding. Neither does Lexis/Nexis define the place on a page that an article appears; thus, while we will have the page number for each article, we were not able to determine if it was a lead article.

Identifying Frames in Communication

To identify the set of frames used in discussion of each issue, we consulted prior academic and popular literature (e.g., Cook, 2005, on Social Security; Price, Nir, & Cappella, 2005, on gay marriage), interest group publications, and past news coverage of the issues. This approach yielded a set of initial frames. In many cases, frames were added after coding began, reflecting the flexibility available with human coding of news text.

For each issue, we constructed a detailed coding document that explained the frame and offered examples of how the frame might be invoked in the news stories. Each frame was defined by its emphasis on a certain aspect of the issue, usually (but not always) a rationale for either supporting or opposing one side of the issue. Thus, we do not rely merely on the presence or absence of certain keywords to define a frame (e.g., Kellstedt, 2003), but rather use keywords to search for relevant articles. An example of our frame identification instructions on intelligent design is provided in Appendix 13.1.

Our decision to use human coding to identify news frames (and other features) assumed that most articles would have a complex structure, containing multiple frames that would often be interlocked or overlapping, reinforcing or refuting one another. This juxtaposition of frames precludes estimating the number of lines devoted to any particular frame because the boundaries of frames are often unclear. Because attempts to count lines proved highly unreliable, articles were coded simply for the presence or absence of various frames, as well as other features discussed below. The general disorderliness of actual frames in news contrasts with the small number of clearly defined frames typically employed as stimuli in the experimental literature on framing.

The set of frames for each issue appears in Appendix 13.2 (note that this list only includes frames that actually appeared; codes for a few frames that were never invoked are not listed in the appendix, but are available from the authors). In many cases, there are clear evaluative consequences of a given frame. For example, emphasizing civil rights in discussions of the Patriot Act is usually an opposition frame. In other cases, the evaluative implications of the frame are less clear. Emphasizing the partisan divide in debates on the Patriot Act, for instance, could be a frame used by either side in accusing opponents of hindering a resolution by "politicizing" the issue.

We sampled approximately 25% of coded articles and had a second coder code them for reliability. Using the Kappa statistic, we find reliability statistics equal or above .80 for the presence or absence of frames (correcting for chance), and statistics near or above .70 for all other features on which we report here (see below). The details of how we assessed the reliability of our coding as well as more detailed results of our reliability analyses appear in Appendix 13.3.

Coding Frames in News

All coders were undergraduate students who were trained in content analysis in a 10-week undergraduate seminar course on the concept of framing in politics. Each coder completed the content analysis of a political issue as a class assignment for course credit. As part of their training, all coders worked on several practice articles until they understood how to properly apply the defined codes.

To identify frames, each coder proceeded by reading the entire article carefully (multiple times if necessary) to ensure he or she understood the article. Coders were encouraged to make notes directly on the article or on a separate note page as they coded for the following features:

Frames. For each issue, coders referred to the set of defined frames listed on a "frame sheet" (or code book) accompanied by concrete examples of each frame (see Appendix 13.1). Each frame in communication invoked a specific consideration (such as a value, principle, or consequence) that typically established the stakes surrounding the issue. If coders encountered a frame that was not listed in the code book, they placed it in the residual "other frame" category and described the consideration raised by the frame. When the "other frame" appeared multiple times, the set of defined frames was updated to include the new frame.¹² Coders accounted for the presence or absence of each frame in each article.

Frame Position. Each frame may or may not be clearly linked to an *overall position* on a given issue, either in support or opposition to the issue attitude described in Table 13.1. Coders evaluated

whether the frame reflected a position (either pro or con or no position) and recorded the context in which the frame was used. While this introduces obvious subjectivity, we found an impressive amount of reliability on frame position, with agreement (correcting for chance) reaching nearly 0.90 (see Appendix 13.3). As expected, many frames were marshaled exclusively on only one side of the issue, but there also were other frames that were invoked by both sides.

Other Frame Features. A number of semantic or rhetorical features may influence the applicability of a given frame. As mentioned, this is an area in need of substantial development and future study (and thus we simply explore whether the features appear or not). We identified three general features, based on persuasion research on "message factors," that may affect applicability in specific circumstances (see also Arceneaux, 2008; Petersen, 2008). First, coders noted when a frame was put forth and then was explicitly *argued against* or *refuted* in the same article. For example, "some say urban sprawl will hurt the environment, but that is not the case." When refutation occurred, the counter-frame was noted (if one existed). Refutation is orthogonal to the position codes—a frame may take a pro, con, or no position and still be *criticized* or *refuted*. Coders also noted whether support for a frame was buttressed by a reference to *statistical* or numerical data or whether frames were supported with *episodic* evidence pertaining to individual cases or experiences.¹³

These three features—refutation and references to statistical or episodic evidence—have been shown to affect the strength of messages on different issues in various ways; the precise impact of each may depend on other characteristics of the news story and of the particular issue under consideration (see O'Keefe, 1999, 2002). Experimental research on how these semantic or rhetorical features affect framing is needed if we are to isolate effects.¹⁴

A final aspect of the frames we coded was whether, in the case of multiple frames, the frames were presented *simultaneously* (i.e., both frames were raised at the same point in the articles and discussed in conjunction with each other), or *sequentially* (i.e., multiple frames were presented one after the other without overlap). An example of simultaneous presentation would be: "The proposed KKK rally raises conflicts between concerns for free speech and public safety. Free speech advocates defend the rally on First Amendment grounds, while opponents of the rally argue that the threat of violence should take priority over free speech." Sequential presentation would be: "The proposed KKK rally has elicited a range of reactions. Some commentators have argued that the rally falls squarely within the scope of the First Amendment. Critics emphasize the threats to public safety that are posed by the rally." Such juxtaposition of frames is worth exploring because it may affect how people process information, as individuals typically have less difficulty understanding sequential presentations (e.g., Rahn, Aldrich, & Borgida, 1994).

RESULTS

As mentioned, most studies of media frames focus on the frequencies with which different frames appear. This is certainly important information and we report these frequencies for each issue in tables that appear in Appendix 13.2. The tables show that, across issues, some frames rarely appear whereas others are used with great frequency. While there are some interesting trends on specific issues, we focus on four dimensions of media framing that typically get little or no attention. These include (1) assessing the number of different frames in the news environment, (2) the direction of those frames relative to the issue, (3) over-time changes in number and direction, and (4) the juxtaposition of frames in media coverage.

Table 13.2 reports the number of articles coded for each issue (recall that for several issues, random samples were drawn), the total number of frames identified across all articles, and the

TABLE 13.2
Number and Direction of Frames

Issue or Event	Number of articles coded	Total frames identified	Average number of frames per article (std. dev.)	Total effective number of frames	Frame direction (% Pro minus % Con)	Over time change in effective no. of frames (Time 2 no. minus Time 1 no.)	Over time change in frame direction (Time 2% minus Time 1%)
Patriot Act	122	279	2.29 (1.50)	5.76	-10.55%	0.21	-62.75%
Global warming	82	175	2.13 (1.18)	4.96	-4.00%	-0.44	-29.29%
Intelligent design	58	115	1.98 (1.78)	4.6	-87.83%	-0.43	-14.63%
Same-sex marriage in U.S.	139	251	1.81 (1.40)	5.41	-18.37%	1.53	19.48%
Same-sex marriage in Canada	139	388	2.79 (1.78)	6.19	-14.43%	-0.03	-32.99%
Social Security 1	40	97	2.43 (1.20)	5.37	-4.17%	-1.74	-5.50%
Social Security 2	92	204	2.22 (2.26)	5.84	-43.84%	1.6	21.00%
Buch v. Gore	134	261	1.95 (1.55)	5.51	2.70%	-0.38	-38.49%
Abu Ghraib controversy	159	286	1.81 (1.36)	6.9	-68.31%	-1.44	-4.43%
California immigration initiative (Prop. 187)	80	183	2.29 (1.50)	6.74	-86.44%	-2.21	-14.63%
Nazi rally	36	64	1.78 (1.04)	3.52	-41.94%	0.11	-21.54%
Penn. Ku Klux Klan rally	23	26	1.13 (0.69)	3.22	-100.00%	-1.27	0.00%
Tenn. Ku Klux Klan rally	29	43	1.48 (0.87)	3.03	-95.35%	-1.58	50.00%
Illinois casino proposal	20	29	1.45 (0.89)	4.25	-0.74	-0.74	
Total/average across issues	1153	2401	1.97 (1.42)	5.09 (1.19)	-44.04%	-0.49	-10.29%

average number of frames per article. Overall, 1,153 articles were coded and 2,401 total frames identified. Across all issues, the average article contained nearly two frames, a reality at odds with the typical experimental manipulation using single-frame stories or reports. There is some variance in frames per article across issues; of note is that stories about same-sex marriage in the U.S. contained an average of 1.81 frames per article while, in the *Globe and Mail*, they contained 2.79. It is unclear whether these differences reflect differences in the nature of media reporting across news sources (i.e., the *New York Times* versus the *Globe and Mail*) or variation in the substance of the issue in the two countries. Table 13.3 shows more clearly the distribution of frames by article. Over 35% of the articles contained more than two frames, contrasting even more sharply with current experimental designs.

Aside from the number of frames in each article, we were interested in the total number of frames that were discussed regularly—that is, the number that set the terms of the debate. As mentioned, experimental work on framing typically assumes that one or, at most, two frames inform debate in any given news story. To assess the extent to which this deviates from actual media coverage, we calculated the “effective number” of frames per issue based on the number of unique frames appearing in news stories and the relative frequency with which each frame is used. Our specific measure used for this purpose borrows from Laakso and Taagepera’s (1979) measure of the effective number of parties (also see Rae, 1971). Specifically, if there are T unique frames on an issue and p_i ($i = 1$ to T) is the proportion of times that frame i is used relative to other frames, then the effective number of frames can be expressed as $N_e = 1/\sum p_i^2$. This approach assigns a weight to each frame based on its relative frequency of use. For example, if two frames appeared in equal proportion, the index would generate two effective frames. If instead, one of the frames occurs two-thirds of the time and the other one-third of the time, the index computes 1.84 effective frames.¹⁵ This number therefore reflects the actual number of frames that are salient in the debate.

The effective number of frames for each issue appears in the fifth column of Table 13.2. Without exception, the effective number of frames used in the discussion of the issue substantially exceeds 1 or 2, and in some cases, approaches 7. Clearly, this stands in sharp contrast to the controlled experimental environment in which there is a focus on just one or two frames. In reality, audiences are exposed to multiple frames per article and to an even greater number of distinct frames across a series of articles. How individuals deal with this large mix of frames when forming opinions is unclear and demands further study.

The large number of effective frames undoubtedly reflects each side of an issue putting forth various alternative ways of defining the issue. As mentioned, some scholars suggest that competition between frames will be balanced and, therefore, neither side will gain a significant advantage (e.g., Jackman & Sniderman, 2006; Sniderman & Theriault, 2004; Wittman, 1995).

TABLE 13.3
Frame Frequencies in Articles

Number of frames	Article frequency	Percentage of articles
0	153	13%
1	306	27%
2	285	25%
3	223	19%
4 or more	186	16%
Total	1,153	100%

There are two meanings of balance here: balance in the relative strength of opposing frames, and balance in the relative frequency of opposing frames. The relative strengths of the frames identified for the various issues we analyzed will have to be assessed in a subsequent study, so we cannot say whether opposing sides on these issues employed equally strong frames. But we can determine whether directional balance occurs because we coded the direction of each frame used in the article. In essence, we can evaluate Zaller's (1996, p. 20) claim that because "the mass media routinely carry competing political messages . . . members of the public who are heavily exposed to one message tend to be heavily exposed to its opposite as well."¹⁶

To assess this proposition, we computed the percentage of frames used in a pro direction and the percentage used in a con direction (with pro and con defined relative to the attitude of interest for each issue in Table 13.1). We then subtracted the percentage con from the percentage pro to yield an overall measure of directional bias; for example, if the number of pro and con frames were identical (i.e., balanced), the result would be 0. If con frames exceeded pro frames, the percentage would be negative. The results, reported in the sixth column of Table 13.2, reveal a stark negative bias. In only three cases (global warming, Social Security phase I, and *Bush v. Gore*) is the index within 5% on either side of 0, which can be regarded as roughly balanced coverage. However, *balance is not the norm*: on average, negative frames greatly exceeded positive frames by 44%. The largest negative biases emerge on the trio of right-wing rallies (which overall show similar trends with one another), immigration, intelligent design, Abu Ghraib, and Social Security phase II. Moderate negative biases (between -10% and -20%) occurred in coverage of the renewal of the Patriot Act and same-sex marriage in both the United States and Canada.

While these results are consistent with the general *negativity bias* noted in other realms of political discussion (e.g., Geer, 2006; Lau, 1989), an equally compelling possibility is that it reflects the *dominance of liberal frames* expressed in opposition to the KKK and Nazis, teaching intelligent design in public schools, denying illegal immigrants access to public benefits under Proposition 187, the government and military's treatment of prisoners in Abu Ghraib, and the privatization of Social Security (see Entman, 2007, on using frames to study media bias).

One final point revealed by these data is how an issue can change over time. In the case of Social Security, our second time period (2004–2005) displayed much greater negativity than the first (1997–2000). To capture potential changes of coverage corresponding to changes in the salience of the issue, we analyzed the number and direction of frames before and after the midpoint in the time series on each issue. We computed the effective number of frames and the directional bias of frames for each time period and then calculated the difference between times 1 and 2. Negative numbers thus reflect shrinkage in the number of frames and a change in directional bias in a negative direction.

The seventh column of Table 13.2 indicates that the number of effective frames declines over time, on average dropping by nearly half of a frame per story. There are exceptions, as in the case of same-sex marriage in the U.S. and Social Security (from 2004–2005), but there appears to be a general tendency over time toward reduction in the number of effective frames. This presumably reflects a process where opposing sides on an issue, after learning which frames resonate best with the public, choose to promote those frames and cause them to dominate media coverage.

There is a similar trend over time in the directional bias of media coverage. Although there are some exceptions, the evidence shows a general movement toward increasingly negative coverage, with the average issue exhibiting 10% more negativity later in the issue cycle compared to earlier. These over-time trends provide guidance as scholars begin to explore over-time effects. As mentioned, with few exceptions, this is an unexplored area. The results of this analysis suggest that further research in this area should look at how *over-time trends in the number and balance of frames* affects public opinion.

Our final set of coding categories concerns specific features of the frames. Frames were mentioned and refuted 13% (314/2,380) of the time; statistics were cited 7% (168/2,374) of the time; and episodic references to personal examples were included 13% (312/2,372) of the time.¹⁷ As explained, several of these characteristics could influence the applicability of a frame and warrant further study of framing effects on public opinion, despite the limited appearance of these features in the issues included in this investigation.

Finally, we coded how frames appear in relation to one another in the context of a news report (i.e., simultaneously or sequentially with another frame). A frame is *simultaneous* with another if the two frames are conjoined in the text with no clear division. Frames are *sequential* if they appear in succession in the text without being explicitly connected.¹⁸ Both simultaneous and sequential frames appeared regularly in news articles: 46% (1,089/2,356) of frames appeared simultaneously with another frame, and 40% (936/2,349) of frames were presented sequentially to one another.

CONCLUSION

A realistic study of opinion formation during political campaigns needs to first develop a conceptual framework for characterizing the context in which opinions are formed (Druckman & Lupia, 2005). With this goal in mind, we outlined in this chapter a methodology for content analyzing media frames of political issues that takes account of the substance, competitive balance, and interaction of media frames during periods when issues are salient on the public agenda. Our results suggest that studies of media frames should pay greater attention to the variety of competitive contexts in which the public receives information. We found that in the life cycle of a salient political issue, each side uses many frames to advance its position. There are varying degrees of direct engagement between opposing arguments, and media coverage rarely presents balanced coverage of each side's frames. Because news stories typically contain *more* than one or two effective frames, readers rarely encounter a scenario—common in experimental studies—in which they are restricted to a single monolithic frame of the issue. Thus, framing effects that occur outside controlled experimental settings are not well understood.

We suggest that the next step in this program of research should be to empirically examine how these additional features of media frames affect public opinion. This research agenda is consistent with a large literature on decision-making that shows the influence of context on how the public processes information (e.g., Payne, Bettman, & Johnson, 1993; see also Mueller, 1973; Zaller, 1992). Our own experimental research has found that direct competition between frames increases the motivation of individuals to assess the strength or applicability of frames. The limited scope of our experiments, however, did not permit us to explore which other aspects of media coverage may make a frame more or less persuasive. Future studies, therefore, should examine the impact of exposure to more realistic news scenarios to understand how the relative balance and interaction of multiple frames over time affect their availability, accessibility, and applicability in public opinion.

APPENDIX 13.1

INTELLIGENT DESIGN FRAMES

Intelligent Design (ID)

This page reports the set of "intelligent design" frames. The specific frames are in **bold** with representative quotes/examples following. In some cases a given example would be coded as

including multiple frames. This is explained in the examples. In many cases, frames may be invoked simultaneously.

These examples are not exhaustive—a frame can be invoked using related language. Also recall that frames can be added and/or merged if your coding experience suggests doing so.

Positions

Pro = Support the right to teach intelligent design in school and/or support intelligent design as a viable alternative to evolution.

Con = Oppose the right to teach intelligent design in school and/or oppose intelligent design as a viable alternative to evolution.

Note that "science" will be commonly invoked with all the frames. We have a "scientific theory" frame that refers specifically to the substance of science (i.e., a scientific theory) and/or scientists; this would not include teaching science, education science standards, or vague references to science.

Education/teaching—ID is about the appropriate way to educate/teach and decisions about ID revolve around what one thinks of education.

- Supporters of ID have had an insidious influence on the teaching of science in local schools.
- Voters came to their senses in voting out school board members opposed to the teaching of evolution.
- School boards have gutted science standards.
- Teaching ID is a matter of academic freedom.

Scientific theory/scientists—ID is about science and what appropriate scientific theory is. Often science and culture will be invoked simultaneously. This can be done by proponents saying ID is valid science even if it is consistent with religion, or opponents saying ID is not valid science and it is just religion. Code for both frames if both are invoked.

- Intelligent design is "supernatural science."
- Only a tiny minority of scientists support ID.
- [ID is a religious belief,] masquerading as science—the bracketed part invokes a culture/religion frame. Thus, this sentence would be coded as two frames.
- [ID is a cultural issue,] not a scientific one—the bracketed part invokes a culture/religion frame. Thus, this sentence would be coded as two frames.
- [Attacks on intelligent design are veiled cultural attacks against religion—part of a move to devalue the beliefs of religious people in this country]; therefore defense of ID as a scientific theory is needed to defend religious believers in this country—the bracketed portion invokes a culture/religion frame. Thus, this sentence would be coded as two frames.
- Scientific arguments for evolution cannot resolve a debate between [opposing sides in a cultural debate.]—the bracketed part invokes a culture/religion frame. Thus, this sentence would be coded as two frames.

Culture/Religion—ID is a cultural or religious issue. Often science and culture will be invoked simultaneously. This can be done by proponents saying ID is valid science even if it is consistent with religion, or opponents saying ID is not valid science and that it is just religion. Code for both frames if both are invoked.

- ID is a religious belief, [masquerading as science]—the bracketed part invokes a scientific theory frame. Thus, this sentence would be coded as two frames.
- ID is a cultural issue, [not a scientific one]—the bracketed part invokes a scientific theory frame. Thus, this sentence would be coded as two frames.
- ID is part of the cluster of issues including anti-abortion, anti gay rights, Christian symbols.
- One cannot present a religious viewpoint as the other side in a debate with evolution.
- Attacks on intelligent design are veiled cultural attacks against religion—part of a move to devalue the beliefs of religious people in this country; [therefore defense of ID as a scientific theory is needed to defend religious believers in this country.]—the bracketed part invokes a scientific theory frame. Thus, this sentence would be coded as two frames.
- [Scientific arguments for evolution cannot resolve a debate between] opposing sides in a cultural debate—the bracketed part invokes a scientific theory frame. Thus, this sentence would be coded as two frames.

Tolerance/Free Speech—ID is about the right to speak freely and be tolerant of other views, and/or about censorship. If there is a discussion of religious intolerance, code as both tolerance and culture/religion.

- Opponents of ID are fanning the flames of intolerance.
- Opposition to discussing ID amounts to a suppression of free speech (Discovery Institute frame).
- Both sides ought to be taught (George W. Bush frame). People should be exposed to different ideas.
- Defense of ID is a defense of freedom of inquiry and free speech, given the attacks on scientists who experience recriminations for departing from Darwinian orthodoxy.
- The influence of ID has been achieved through back-door pressure on textbook publishers, resulting in censorship of references to evolution in textbooks.

Other Frame—portraying the issue in terms that do not fit into one of the other frames.

APPENDIX 13.2

FRAMES AND FRAME FREQUENCIES^a

Patriot Act	Number	Percentage
Civil liberties	74	26.52%
Terrorism	65	23.30%
Implementation/process	28	10.04%
Enactment/renewal	18	6.45%
Politics	37	13.26%
Ambivalence/balance	6	2.15%
Expanded/excessive government power	36	12.90%
Other	15	5.38%
Total	279	100%
<i>Global warming</i>		
Environmental problems/evidence of specific environmental problems	41	23.43%
Health/human rights	15	8.57%
Economy	28	16.00%

<i>Global warming (cont.)</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Treaties/rules to control global warming	55	31.43%
Ethics	10	5.71%
Market	19	10.86%
Other	7	4.0%
<i>Total</i>	175	100%

Intelligent design

Education/teaching	20	17.39%
Scientific theory/scientists	41	35.65%
Culture/religion	28	24.35%
Tolerance/free speech	3	2.61%
Other	23	20.00%
<i>Total</i>	115	100%

Same-sex marriage in the U.S.

Equal/civil rights	36	14.34%
Freedom/tolerance	21	8.37%
Special rights	5	1.99%
Religious/cultural values	28	11.16%
Family	32	12.75%
Business	5	1.99%
Politics/strategy	77	30.68%
Federalism	46	18.33%
Other	1	0.40%
<i>Total</i>	251	100%

Same-sex marriage in Canada

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Equal/civil rights	62	15.98%
Freedom/tolerance	5	1.29%
Special rights	1	0.26%
Religious/cultural values	89	22.94%
Family	55	14.18%
Politics/strategy	95	24.48%
Federalism	10	2.58%
Anti-U.S.	7	1.80%
Human rights	12	3.09%
Other	52	15.00%
<i>Total</i>	388	100%

Social Security I

Beneficiary/victim	14	14.43%
Security (in old age)	6	6.19%
Individual choice	9	9.28%
Outcome (results of radical change, results of no change, sustainability)	15	15.46%
Political strategy	26	26.80%
Exaggeration/real problem	3	3.09%
Forecasting	23	23.71%
Other	1	1.03%
<i>Total</i>	97	100%

Social Security II

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Beneficiary/victim	32	15.69%
Security (in old age)	25	12.25%
Individual choice	22	10.78%
Outcome (results of radical change, results of no change, sustainability)	54	26.47%
Political strategy	40	19.61%
Fairness/equality	6	2.94%
Exaggeration/real problem	21	10.29%
Other	4	1.96%
<i>Total</i>	204	100%

Bush v. Gore

Expected winner	32	12.26%
Electoral system	4	1.53%
Democratic process	33	12.64%
Constitution/court	52	19.92%
Political motives	36	13.79%
Framing political motives	3	1.15%
International repercussions	3	1.15%
Election equipment/counting	78	29.89%
Specific voter groups	5	1.92%
Federalism/states rights	10	3.83%
Other	5	1.92%
<i>Total</i>	261	100%

Abu Ghraib controversy

Military responsibility	47	16.43%
Administration responsibility	52	18.18%
Individual responsibility	53	18.53%
Military commander responsibility	53	18.53%
Other responsibility	5	1.75%
Negative international relations consequences	29	10.14%
Positive international relations consequences	5	1.75%
Negative domestic consequences	8	2.80%
Positive domestic consequences	1	0.35%
Justification	19	6.64%
Other	14	4.90%
<i>Total</i>	286	100%

California immigration initiative (Prop. 187)^b

Democratic process	14	7.65%
Political strategy	24	13.11%
Characterizations of the illegal immigrant	10	5.46%
Causes of the increasing number of illegal immigrants	7	3.83%
Effectiveness of measures to deter illegal immigration	13	7.10%
Legality of 187's provisions	33	18.03%
Consequences	50	27.32%
Legal vs. illegal immigrants	8	4.37%
Police state/excessive state authority	15	8.20%
Other	9	4.92%
<i>Total</i>	183	100%

<i>Nazi rally</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Public safety	23	35.94%
Free speech	21	32.81%
Broader implications (e.g., of not allowing the rally)	4	6.25%
Reputation	3	4.69%
Opposing racism and prejudice	13	20.31%
<i>Total</i>	64	100%

<i>Pennsylvania KKK rally</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Public safety	5	19.23%
Free speech	4	15.38%
Opposing racism and prejudice	13	50.00%
Other	4	15.38%
<i>Total</i>	26	100%

<i>Tennessee KKK rally</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Public safety	22	51.16%
Free speech	9	20.93%
Broader implications (e.g., of not allowing the rally)	2	4.65%
Reputation	4	9.30%
Opposing racism and prejudice	5	11.63%
Other	1	2.33%
<i>Total</i>	43	100%

<i>Illinois casino proposal</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Public schools/education	9	31.03%
Tax relief	10	34.48%
Job creation	3	10.34%
Economic development help	2	6.90%
Other budgetary relief from casino	1	3.45%
Social costs (addiction, suicide, family impact)	1	3.45%
Effects on poor	1	3.45%
Need for other political support (from state legislature and/or Mayor Daley)	1	3.45%
Other	1	3.45%
<i>Total</i>	29	100%

^a We only list frames that appeared at least once in the coverage. We coded for some other frames that were never invoked (e.g., reputation in the Pennsylvania KKK rally).

^b Much of the debate about Prop. 187 revolved around race and economics. References to race and/or economics occur with various different frames. We thus coded, along with each specific frame, whether there was a reference to race and/or economics. These data are available from the authors.

APPENDIX 13.3

CODING RELIABILITY

We assessed the reliability of our coding by taking a random sample of 25% of the articles for each issue. A separate trained coder then coded the subsample and we compared the results between this reliability coder and the main coders. Our key variables denote the absence or presence of a frame in a given article, and the position taken by a given frame. Since both of these

variables are nominal, the appropriate reliability statistics are the percentage agreement between the two coders and the percentage of agreement correcting for the possibility of agreement by chance. To account for chance agreement, we used the Kappa statistic. In a given article (e.g., on the Patriot Act), we analyzed whether the two coders agreed on the presence or absence of each frame (e.g., civil liberties). Kappa corrects for the fact that the coders would sometimes arrive at the same coding decision by chance (especially since they only have two options: present or absent). Then, for each frame that is present, we examined agreement between the coders on the positional direction of the frame (i.e., whether it was pro or con).

Overall, we find that our data are reliable with frame percentage agreement of 93% and a Kappa of .80 (standard error = .02).¹⁹ Our percentage agreement and Kappa for frame direction are, respectively, 91% and .88 (.03). These statistics meet or exceed typical standards of reliability (see, e.g., Neuendorf, 2001, p. 143; Riffe, Lacy, & Fico 1998, p. 131). The specific reliability statistics for each issue appear in the table below. (We merge the three hate group rallies, each of which had the same set of frames, so as to increase the number of cases). In all cases, the Kappas are highly significant with $p \leq .01$ for two-tailed tests. Note that the Kappa values are considerably lower on average than the percent agreement.

Our reliability statistics for the other measures—including refutation, statistics, and episodes—are just as high, with respective Kappas of .95 (.08), .84 (.11), and .86 (.07). The simultaneous and sequential coding was less reliable with respective Kappas of .71 (.13) and .67 (.15).

<i>Issue or event</i>	<i>Presence of frame: Percent agreement</i>	<i>Presence of frame: Kappa</i>	<i>Direction: Percent agreement (std. error)</i>	<i>Direction: Kappa (std. error)</i>
Patriot Act	93%	.84 (.07)	93%	.91 (.07)
Global warming	94%	.85 (.08)	94%	.90 (.12)
Intelligent design	96%	.91 (.14)	100%	1.00 (.15)
Same-sex marriage in the U.S.	95%	.84 (.07)	86%	.82 (.10)
Same-sex marriage in Canada	93%	.78 (.05)	96%	.95 (.07)
Social Security I	89%	.76 (.12)	86%	.79 (.16)
Social Security II	95%	.78 (.09)	88%	.84 (.13)
<i>Bush v. Gore</i>	92%	.72 (.05)	95%	.83 (.09)
Abu Ghraib controversy	92%	.73 (.05)	89%	.85 (.08)
California immigration initiative (Prop. 187)	95%	.86 (.07)	73%	.62 (.08)
Hate group rallies	92%	.79 (.10)	100%	1.00 (.22)
Casino proposal	93%	.84 (.15)	92%	.81 (.20)
<i>Total across issues</i>	93%	.80 (.02)	91%	.88 (.03)

NOTES

1. Parts of this section come from Chong and Druckman (2007c).
2. This conceptualization can apply to any object of evaluation, including candidates as well as attributions of responsibility (see Chong & Druckman, 2007a, for a discussion). Also, without loss of generality, we can think of *i* as a dimension (Riker, 1990), a consideration (Zaller, 1992), a value (Sniderman, 1993), or a belief (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).
3. de Vreese et al. (2001, pp. 108–109; 2004) distinguish issue-specific from generic frames. The former pertain to “specific topics or news events [while the latter are] broadly applicable to a range of different news topics, some even over time, and potentially, in different cultural contexts.” Examples of generic frames include episodic and thematic frames, conflict frames, or strategic frames. We agree that some frames apply across

- issues and are more general descriptions of news; however, we prefer to link a frame explicitly to an issue and an evaluation (also see Entman, 2004). This obviates the need to specify when a frame is sufficiently general to be classified as generic. For example, is an economic frame a generic frame? De Vreese et al. (2001) suggest it is, but it also serves as a specific issue frame for welfare reform, according to Shen and Edwards (2005). Also, if there is a feature in the communication such as conflict that is not connected to an issue and evaluation, we suggest using a term other than frame (Entman suggests "script").
4. Others explore how politicians or the media adopt frames (e.g., Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Druckman, Jacobs, & Ostermeier, 2004; Entman, 2004; Fridkin & Kenney, 2005; Scheufele, 1999, p. 109) or how citizens adopt frames based on discussions with other citizens (e.g., Druckman & Nelson, 2003; Gamson, 1992; Walsh, 2004).
 5. See Chong and Druckman (2007a, 2007b) for a discussion of the conditions that stimulate applicability evaluations.
 6. Jerit's (2008) research on the debate over passage of the Clinton health care policy is an exception. Jerit examines each side's arguments and the effect on public opinion of proponents' engaging opposition arguments. She finds that engagement appears to increase aggregate public support for the policy. Another exception is Baumgartner et al. (2008), who offer an impressively detailed analysis of death penalty coverage.
 7. In our terms, the RAS model largely focuses on accessibility and ignores applicability.
 8. Other sources one could use include congressional testimony, presidential statements, interest group statements, campaign advertisements, and so on. We obviously endorse the use of multiple sources (and comparisons between them), with the rationale of maximizing ecological validity (i.e., what the information environment actually looks like), whether from elite- or to citizen-based discourse. Woolley (2000) suggests that different media lead to very different portrayals of coverage; but given our focus on the dynamics of coverage (e.g., presence, absence, over-time sequence of multiple frames) rather than the actual percentages of specific frame use, we suspect the *New York Times* will provide a fairly accurate picture of general media dynamics along these lines.
 9. See Althaus, Edy, and Phalen (2001) and Edy, Althaus, and Phalen (2005) on using news abstracts.
 10. We monitor coverage of Proposition 187 through the *San Francisco Chronicle* rather than the *Los Angeles Times* because the latter is not available on major databases.
 11. Given the size and capacities of our coding team, we drew samples for any issue on which we found substantially more than 150 articles. The analysis excluded letters to the editor.
 12. For example, in our analysis of proposals for reforming Social Security between 1997 and 2000, coders regularly encountered discussion of how evaluations of reform proposals depend on uncertain future forecasts; therefore, we added a forecasting frame to the initial set of frames.
 13. This is related to but distinct from Iyengar's (1991) purely episodic or thematic frames; for us, these are specific aspects or subdimensions of issue frames.
 14. For this project, we also coded for various items that we do not analyze here. We recorded the identity of any source cited or quoted in connection with the frame, because credible sources can increase the applicability of a frame. (We do not analyze this code here because we are continuing to work on its operationalization.) Additionally, we recorded whether a given frame was "primary," meaning that it was the most prominent in the article (e.g., received the most space), or "secondary," meaning it was mentioned more in passing (a frame could only be secondary if there was another frame that was primary). We also coded whether the article, overall, was pro or con (regardless of the frames), and whether a frame was evident in the title of the article. Coders also estimated the percentage of the article that was "unframed." Non-framed material included transitions, facts, background material, and general text that did not put forth one of the frames.
- We considered including other message factors, but additional story features either did not clearly apply to specific frames (e.g., fear appeals may appear in news stories but did not seem to occur as parts of frames *per se*) or did not surface in our preliminary assessments.
15. The index is a variation of the Herfindahl-Hirschman concentration index, which is simply $\sum p_i^2$. While some have suggested alternative weighting schemes (e.g., Molinar, 1991), this is clearly the most accepted index (see, e.g., Lijphart, 1994).
 16. Jackman and Sniderman (2006, p. 272) make an analogous claim about the balance of frame quality.

- stating that a "commonly satisfied" condition in politics is that "arguments on opposing sides of an issue are of equal quality" (also see Brewer & Gross, 2005; Hansen, 2007; Sniderman & Theriault, 2004).
17. Most but not all coders recorded these features; thus, our number of observations is lower here.
 18. An example of simultaneous frames, on the intelligent design issue, would be a sentence such as "Intelligent design is a religious belief, masquerading as science." This frames the issue in terms of culture/religion and science. It would be sequential if the article presented religious and scientific portrayals completely separately (e.g., in distinct paragraphs with no mixing).
 19. In checking reliability, we excluded "other" frames.

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