

Framing Connections: An Essay on Improving the Relationship between Rhetorical and Social Scientific Frame Studies, Including a Study of G. W. Bush's Framing of Immigration

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We agree with recent scholarship that calls for more extensive efforts to bridge the divergent approaches to framing studies. However, several terminological and methodological barriers exist to finding common ground between social scientific and rhetorical frame scholarship. In response, we argue for a greater sense of methodological pluralism in frame studies. To make our argument, we outline the position of rhetoric in contemporary framing scholarship, propose points of contact that can serve as a reinforcing element with social scientific research, and include a brief case study to show how rhetorical framing can employ and build upon the advances of empirical studies in an analysis of competing frames used by President George W. Bush on the issue of immigration.

Keywords: framing, George W. Bush, immigration, interdisciplinary studies, political campaigns, presidential rhetoric, research methods, rhetoric

Introduction

Research in message framing is extensive in communication studies, both in humanities and the social sciences. But despite a shared theoretical heritage, there is an uneasy relationship between their approaches to research in framing. Substantial disciplinary disjunctions exist in understanding the purpose of framing studies, in the use of certain terminology, and in the distinct lack of interdisciplinary citation and the unproductive use of cross-disciplinary work to inform scholarship.

Previous studies have justified the role of humanities in taking on framing research. The purpose of this article is to expand on these studies to explicate the relationship of rhetorical framing scholarship to social scientific studies and argue for a sense of methodological pluralism in framing studies, pointing to the message initiator/message receiver relationship as one area where both sides can make key

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contributions to framing research. To accomplish this task, we examine several areas of tension between social scientific and rhetorical/humanistic approaches to framing, propose areas where rhetorical studies in particular can make key contributions to framing, and conclude with a rhetorically oriented framing study of President George W. Bush's campaign for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) that demonstrates our approach of integrating insights from all sides into framing research.

Divergence in Rhetorical and Social Science Framing Research Purpose and Definition

Despite significant overlap there are many divergences in the perspectives of the social science and rhetorical traditions in frame research. One major divergence is in purpose.

The purpose of framing research in the social scientific tradition is to discover the presence and features of individual and mediated frames and the impact they have on perception, cognition, and decision making (e.g., Iyengar, 1994; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). Objects of study include public addresses, news story trends, and the consumers of those pieces. Individual frames organize experience under particular headings. Those headings shape how such experiences are evaluated. A "framed" message attempts to appeal to an audience's individual frames of reference—a conception that lends itself to operationalization and quantification (Scheufele, 1999). In a communicative act, the existence of a frame can be identified, the sources of its construction can be traced ("frame as dependent variable"), and framing efforts can be experimentally or statistically examined for effect ("frame as independent variable"). Separate headings can lead to different interpretations of how an issue is defined—for example, whether affirmative action is about addressing an "undeserved advantage" or if it is "reverse discrimination" (Kinder & Sanders, 1990; see also Berinsky & Kinder, 2006; Cooper & Pease, 2009; Gross & D'Ambrosio, 1999; Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley, 1997; Sniderman & Theriault, 2004). Research methods include coding large quantities of messages, survey research, or experimental research and application of statistical tests to find evidence of the presence and impact of frames.

For scholars of rhetoric, the purpose of framing research is to understand why and how the rhetor (the speaker, broadly) wanted to frame his or her message, how it was executed, and how it might plausibly have impacted the audience (Zarefsky, 2008). Rhetorical scholars employ historical, contextual, and textual analysis while taking unique or landmark historical cases as objects of study. Such research treats the audience as a historical body and uses data available to reach its conclusion on effect. In their role as critics, rhetoricians often evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of framing attempts as measures of persuasiveness. Moreover, the meaning-shaping nature of frames and the importance of rhetorical frame research to interpret and judge framing attempts is emphasized (Kuypers, 2010; Zarefsky, 2008). Rhetoric is particularly suited to examining the application of a general theme to a specific circumstance—a key element of framing. Compared to experimental research or content analysis, rhetorical analysis is more explicitly focused on investigating the probable implications of framing events, particularly single cases, within full context of the broader, all-encompassing messages at work. In this way, rhetoric resembles qualitative research and offers some key advantages, including the ability to study the probable implications of framing events in cases that are resistant to quantitative analysis (though we disagree with Kuypers that rhetorical analysis is a kind of qualitative research).

A second area of divergence is terminology. Similar terminology has unfortunately led to misunderstandings inside and between the two traditions. What constitutes a frame is often poorly described, and the presence or structure of "frames" is often just asserted by researchers rather than grounded in real conditions of experience. With an abundance of interpretations come an "operational thinness" in which the concept of what a "frame" is and how it is studied is compromised (Kinder, 2007).

Rhetorical scholars, for example, rely on the empirical work of social scientists to establish the existence of frames in general, but then use different methods to discover specific frames. For example, in their analysis of the media's portrayal of the Matthew Shepard murder, Ott and Aoki (2002) prominently cite Iyengar to establish the broad significance of cognitive framing. But their "frame analysis" of the news media employs neither the empirical or psychological techniques used by Iyengar to establish the presence or effects of frames. While the premise of their work is based in empirically established cognitive frames, their analysis does not analyze cognitive processes or utilize quantifiable methods; therefore it is unclear how to integrate their conclusions with current social scientific thinking on framing. Similarly, in the evaluation of the Sunni movement in Iraq, Ahram (2008) indicates that democracy became the "inescapable" frame for political thinking but bases his conclusion on an examination of "two texts composed by Sunni Islamists addressed to the newly arrived United Nations (UN) special envoy" (p. 115)—documents with unclear influence or linkage to a broad concept of a "frame." Dorsey and Diaz-Barriga (2007) identify Obama's immigration "frame" by examining his books, websites, and floor speeches, but do not indicate what a frame is, how a frame functions, or what standards of evidence should be applied by scholars in establishing the presence or impact of a frame.

Problems of terminological thinness exist for social scientists as well. In examining Coe, Domke, Graham, John, and Pickard's (2004) research, Kuypers (2010) argues their study mistakes thematic *content* as evidence of *frames* (emphasis Kuypers), that is, it looks for binaries instead of the application of that material to a specific case—the essence of issue framing. Other studies operationalize frame without any reference to cultural context or the "curriculum of exposure" that would make a "frame" resonate (Kinder, 2007). Adding to the confusion, scholars in both traditions often cite contradictory definitions in the same article, leaving the readers to approximate the meaning of term "frame."

So, "what is a frame again?" (Kinder, 2007, p. 158). And, if there is disagreement on the definition, does our research still add up to a "framing" field? Or, even if we agree, or provisionally agree, can our different methods really claim to study the same phenomena? And, can we legitimately base our research in one tradition while pursuing research in another methodology?

Our answer is yes, framing can be broadly understood and, because it can be understood, we can engage in cross-disciplinarily grounded research that contributes to the field of framing. While the questions above point to problems regarding the clarity, definition, purpose, and value of framing studies that pose significant barriers to "productive interactions" between the two traditions (Payne, 2001; Zarefsky, 2008) and the legitimacy (and perceived legitimacy) of each tradition's approach, method, and results, we believe a sense of methodological pluralism—an "atmosphere conducive to the exploration of different questions using different approaches" (Ahmed & Sil, 2012, p. 948)—can overcome most of these barriers without resorting to the sometimes onerous demand for mixed methods research (MMR).

Linking Purpose and Terminology

The roots of framing studies lie across a variety of perspectives that influence how frames are considered. Rhetoricians frequently ground their work in Burke's macro-sociological conception of frames. For Burke, frames are broad symbolic-interpretive categories of acceptance, rejection, and transition. They are important because "frame[s] of symbolic adjustment" stress their "own peculiar way of building the mental equipment (meanings, attitudes, character) by which one handles the significant factors of his time" (Burke, 1937/1984, p. 34). They are *attitudes* toward interpretation of the events of life. In contrast, the sociologist Goffman, whose book *Frame Analysis* is "considered by many researchers to be a founding text in framing" (Tewksbury, 2011, para. 30), borrows from Bateson's (1972) concept of psycho-social "frames" to analyze the microlevel processes of social organization in "interaction orders" (Goffman, 1959, 1974). Frames, for Goffman, are individuated means of expectation and interpretation based in each person's cultural context and history of experience, reflecting Sherif's (1967) suggestion that each person approaches social occurrences with a frame of reference that is both malleable yet durable.

The variation of frame scales between Burke and Goffman impacts the types of analysis available. Gamson and Lasch's study of political culture follows Goffman in treating frames as a kind of microsociological interactive notation on messages, stating, "Every package has a signature—a set of elements that suggests its core frame and position in shorthand fashion" (Gamson and Lasch, 1983, p. 399). In contrast, Ott and Aoki (2002) use a Burkean macrosocial conception of frame analysis to study the broad cultural ideology at work in interpreting the 1998 hate-crime murder of Matthew Shepard.

A second point of distinction may lie in the way that Goffman's conception of frames has been associated with Burke's "terministic screens" (Ceren, 2008; Taylor & Kinsella, 2007). Burke's own description of the terministic screen is as filter that "highlights" certain features of a situation to produce particular meanings. As a highlighter or a lens filter (as Burke analogizes), it directs the attention prior to full cognition (Burke, 1966). In contrast, Goffman argues that all human activity is anchored in its contextual environment so that each individual's choices are rooted in his or her biography (Goffman, 1974,). It is the experience of situations arising from environmental factors that define a frame, meaning that a frame is being altered by each experience even as it assists in the interpretation of the experience. In a sense, experiences are fitted or sorted into a previous frame of experience, not screened by prior experience. This distinction of metaphor makes a difference. The "frame as constellative" perspective emphasizes identity as presently malleable and buffeted by social experience (hence, opinion research) while the "terministic screen" idea implies a more durable perspective that rules certain messages acceptable or not, creating a stronger sense of situation.

One final point of distinction is the difference between Goffman's "framing" and Burke's (1969) use of pentadic ratios. The pentad is concerned with the way certain structures of thought establish *motives* for action. Burke is interested in the way emphases on one set of pentadic relationships in discourse (scene-act, agency-act, agent-act, etc.) reveal key thought formations that help explain human motives; how we cognitively "frame" an event impacts how we deal with it. This method, put to good use by Tonn, Endress, and Diamond (1993), for example, is sometimes connected to the process of evaluating cognitive framing. When rhetorical theorists say "frame" in the context of Burkean pentads, they mean

"motivating perspectives" rather than social scientists' understanding of Goffman's interpretative shorthand (Crabbe, 2006; Gamson & Lasch, 1983).

The different terminologies have led to the different focuses in research. Yet they are similar in their purpose. Rhetorical studies are interested in how *decisions* are motivated in much the same way that social scientists understand the sorting of framing as having an impact on decision making (without the term "motive"). Thus, we believe these differences, when viewed in context, are opportunities to utilize the strengths of each in a related area of research—a call Reese (2007) makes as well. Sometimes the work overlaps directly, but often rhetorical critics and social scientists are interested in different elements of the framing process. More important than resolving the differences is the commitment by each side to appreciate that the place and value of different approaches. By understanding the differences in perspective—and grounding our research clearly—we can utilize scholarship from across the divide and gain a rounded perspective on many cases of framing, even without fully resolving the term "frame" itself.

Overcoming Methodological Differences

Despite the fact that the original framing innovators engaged in critical, qualitative, and rhetorical analyses (Sherif, Bateson, Goffman, Edelman, and Burke) and experimental research (Tversky and Kahneman), a second barrier to a cross-disciplinary understanding of framing is the fact that scholars tend to privilege their own methodological tradition to the exclusion of others. Yet there are several reasons a sense of methodological pluralism can benefit framing research overall.

Access to more frame locations. Most social scientific scholars rely primarily on empirical, statistical methods and psychological/cognition theories to guide their work. For example, political communication scholars tend to focus on the effect of news frames on receiver decision making, with Nelson et al.'s (1997) research being the landmark study in this area (see also Tversky & Kahneman, 1981, 1986 on choice). Analyses in this vein have focused on the cognitive effects of framing in the message-receiver relationship and have yielded great insights, particularly in news framing analysis (Scheufele, 1999; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

These methods produce repeatable, measurable results but also constrain which frames are available for study. Entman (1993) describes four locations of frames: the rhetor, the text, the transferring/reporting agent (news media for example), and the individual audience member (consumer). Most current empirical studies focus frames in the transferring agent and their impact on the consumers, the areas most amenable to quantification. These studies identify the presence of frames, their separate parts, strengths, and (to some extent) their influence, but do little to reveal the original messaging strategies of rhetors or broad attitudinal patterns of the audience. Hence, they mostly ignore the first two locations of frames—rhetor and text—perhaps because the "why" question resists quantification while the intervening factor of the media makes it difficult to create a research design that isolates the impact of the rhetor's choices. Yet these are the precise locations in which many scholars have invested their attention (Zarefsky, 2004, 2008). Rhetorical studies are well suited to single and historical cases, macrosocial patterns, and frame construction—if we can appreciate different modes of proof.

Beyond the limits of digital proof. Statistical research has provided strong evidence for the impact of frames in audience decision making. But digital modes have limits. Single and historical cases are usually not conducive to scientific research methods, and frames are often related to the use of analogy or metaphors, linguistic modes that intrinsically resist coding (Burke 1954/1984). Of course, some social science studies of framing do reduce metaphors to coding. For example, Burke & Mazzarella (2008) reduce Lakoff and Johnson's (1980a, 1980b) theories of metaphoric structuring of cognition and action to a content analysis in which metaphors are quantified and then discussed in terms of their numerical appearance rather than textual placement or meaning. Such coding may be revealing. But a full understanding of metaphors, as a process of revealing and concealing, cannot fit discrete categories without missing significant elements of the metaphor. By employing rhetorical analysis, framing research can gain the advantage of what statistical analysis of place reveals and engage in a full, phenomenological study of metaphor. By giving place to both social scientific and humanistic research framing research, our sense of the function of metaphor in framing can be more complete.

Singular case and historical studies. There are cases in which a communication event, particularly a historical one, does not permit valid empirical research. In these cases, a critical-interpretive analysis based in defeasible arguments makes more sense. Though these cases do not have experimental control, examining the rhetorical situation and outcome, similar communication events, other cases in the genre, and the speaker's track record in addition to drawing on established theories can contribute significant insights into even single events and provide a certain level of generalizability (Zarefsky, 2008). The efficacies of these methods are exemplified by studies of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech and President Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, each of which is historically significant on its own account and provides us some broad data on how communication events operate. This isn't to say these studies should be blindly accepted—their power is related to their ability to marshal evidence and reasoning. But the methodological approach is sound and opens useful avenues of research for framing analysis, beyond the bounds of media effects studies.

Mixed methods are not necessary. We propose an outlook that accepts a wider variety of research methods. In that vein, a clear recognition of the purpose of rhetoric and social scientific studies and appropriate cross-citation can assist in making our scholarship more encompassing. If rhetorical criticism is understood "as an analogue of the scientific method, applied in circumstances that do not lend themselves to empirical verification" (Zarefsky, 2008, p. 630), it becomes clear that a more complete picture of the framing event benefits social scientific and rhetorical techniques.

But we disagree that MMR is a panacea or necessary. Indeed, most proposed MMR does not involve rhetoric; instead it mixes qualitative and quantitative evidence on the text-consumer or media-consumer relationships or, sometimes, just a content analysis (e.g., Iyengar, 1994; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987; Johnston, 2005). Content analysis is not a rhetorical analysis (Krippendorf, 2004; Pera, 2000) and does not employ the textual, systematic, analogical approach used in rhetorical criticism. Moreover, it is not necessary or even realistic (especially given the space limitations of journals) to demand that a single study accomplish everything. In fact, by emphasizing MMR, we may lose sight of the depth and value of single-method studies (Ahmed & Sil, 2012). However, by understanding the differences and advantages of social scientific and rhetorical research and using those to guide our research and provide interdisciplinary

perspective, we can gain what Zarefsky calls "a richly textured understanding of how framing can be achieved" (2008, p. 638) without demanding mixed methods.

Case Study: Frame Competition in Bush's War and Immigration Rhetoric

Immigration was a particularly difficult issue for the Bush administration. The administration's second term choice to back a guest worker program put it in the position of advocating a policy that was deeply unpopular with the Republican conservative base (Levey, 2007) at a time when the president's general approval rating was below 50% (Dinan, 2006). Near the culmination of the immigration debate in June 2007, only 45% of Republicans and just 35% of self-identified conservative Republicans supported Bush's immigration reforms ("Bush Base Erodes," 2007). Ultimately, reform failed, at least partly because of what sources called the "rhetorical distortions" surrounding the bill ("The Grand Collapse," 2007) that served to alienate a GOP base looking to capitalize on Bush's "terrorizing script of infinite global struggle" heading into the 2008 elections (Ivie & Giner, 2009). Postmortems claim the collapse of the CIR Act constituted the final nail in the coffin for the Bush administration's domestic agenda (Zuckman, 2007) and may have cost the Republicans as many as four states in 2008 (Lawrence, 2008) as efforts to "out-Tancredo Tancredo" forced GOP candidates far to the right of Bush (Knoll et al., 2010).

One revealing moment in the debate over the guest worker program occurred on April 24, 2006, when Bush delivered a speech to Republican supporters in Irvine, California, on the topics of terrorism and immigration. Coming only three weeks before his May 15, 2006, national address on immigration, the Irvine speech was not nationally prominent, but its examination is worthwhile for two reasons. First, it represents the early stages of Bush's attempt to convince conservatives of his vision of immigration reform. Second, because the speech places the War on Terror/Iraq side-by-side with immigration, it is the only single speech detailing what are widely considered to be the strongest and weakest policy elements of Bush's presidency. To wit, we assert that the "rhetorical distortions" affecting the CIR Act were at least partially a result of vulnerabilities created by the Bush administration itself. The Irvine speech demonstrates some of these vulnerabilities, specifically the tension between Bush's attempt to invoke a security frame on the War on Terror/Iraq and his nuanced stance on immigration. Indeed, because its content prefigures much of the upcoming debates on immigration, the Irvine speech can be seen as a synecdoche that reveals the deep and broad frame tensions in the administration's legislative strategy on immigration.

Framing and Security at Irvine

After September 11, 2001, Bush prioritized security across his domestic and foreign agenda while framing himself as an epic leader maneuvering American citizens through the demands of war (Coe et al., 2004; Domke, 2004; John, Domke, Coe, & Graham, 2007; Kuypers, 2006; Wolfe, 2007). All political elites concentrate on creating and manipulating symbols (Edelman, 1988). But even among elites, U.S. presidents have a unique position in relation to the news media and substantial powers of message control, particularly in defining issues (Zarefsky, 2004). Definitional control is valuable for a president. By framing the core understanding of an issue, presidents can partially engineer symbolic and discursive realities, impact the audience's understanding and choices, and avoid having to directly defend their

representation of an issue (Cox, 1981; Edelman, 1988). By applying a broad title type to an argument, for example, to define a set of arguments in terms of the title "security," accesses "a whole bundle of principles" whose own set of broad meanings "might serve as implicit 'arguments'" (Burke, 1966, pp. 86, 87) even if they don't enter into explicit vocalization. These terminological choices can aid or hinder the effectiveness of an intended message by accessing important symbols within the specific communicative environment. Definition is "obviously . . . a strategic moment" (Burke, 1950/1969, p. 24).

At Irvine, Bush begins his speech within his security frame on War on Terror and Iraq; events he believes are the defining moments of our time. He declares, "The war on terror [is not] over. It's not. There is still an enemy that wants to do us harm. And the most important job of the President of the United States is to protect the American people from that harm" (Bush, 2006a, para. 7). The danger is imminent: "a terrorist network with weapons of mass destruction . . . it's just a matter of time" (Bush, 2006a, para. 12). He states, "The only way to deal with them is to . . . bring them to justice which is precisely what the United States of America is doing" (Bush, 2006a, paras. 7, 9).

The scale of these themes is unsurprising. It's an opening that is well within the bounds of the epic frame—a frame of crisis and conflict designed to justify the "rigors of war" and the challenges it puts to the population (Burke, 1937/1984, p. 35). Bush's Manichean outlook on the world is well documented (Gunn, 2004; Murphy, 2003; Wolfe, 2007). From the very earliest moments in the "Address to a Joint Congress and the American People" on September 20, 2001, Bush actively describes the War on Terror as a war between good and evil, concluding, "God is not neutral" (Bush, 2006a, para. 55). Indeed, the "either you're with us or you are with the enemy" theme became the foundational doctrine of Bush's presidency (Coe et al., 2004). Bush's war rhetoric "frames the wars on terrorism as a test of national faith" (Spielvogel, 2005, p. 560) and a call to duty to defeat the enemy (Ivie, 2005).

At Irvine, Bush identifies the peril, emphasizing that "the first lesson of September the 11th 2001 is that we face an enemy that has no regard for innocent life, an enemy which has hijacked a great religion to suit their political needs" (Bush, 2006a, para. 8). The war in Iraq is a conflict between the "totalitarian vision of bin Laden" and his "ideology of hatred" and America's "democracy movement" and its "ideology of hope" (Bush, 2006a, paras. 16, 71)—an ideology supported by desire for liberty placed in each person by the Almighty himself. In doing, Bush invokes the deeply ingrained American belief, rooted in its Puritan heritage, that the United States exists in a spiritual dimension based on a rhetoric of prophesy that calls it to an "inflexible posture of righteousness" (Darsey, 1997, p. 22; Domke, 2004). Bush's moral logic requires—at least in symbolic form—a perpetual war that generates a fear of evildoers that provide an impetus to sustain action; without it, one is seen as weak or indecisive (Spielvogel, 2005). Thus danger requires an agent of action to protect the homeland.

In invoking an epic frame, Bush is that heroic agent. Heroes promote acceptance of situations by "making the hero's character as great as the situation he confronts" (Burke, 1937/1984, p. 43). Bush's continued reference to September 11 serves to prime audiences to think of terrorism and his powerful rhetorical responses afterward (John et al., 2007). He builds his heroic status by arguing that his most important job is to protect the American people from harm, to "use the resources of the Unites States to prevent a [September 11-type] attack from happening again" (Bush, 2006a, para. 8). Bush declares that

"a President must . . . take the words of the enemy seriously" (Bush, 2006a, para. 11), and "these are historic times. My job is to . . . protect you. And my job is to lay the foundation of peace for generations to come" (Bush, 2006a, para. 24). He is the "strict father" who declares his conviction to be strong in the face of those who try to shake the nation's faith (Spielvogel, 2005).

Immigration and Frame Consistency at Irvine

The forces at work in Bush's strategic framing campaign on immigration were complex. The public demands that elites set out a unified and consistent symbolic order to explain what is occurring (Edelman, 1985, 1988). Within the Republican Party, there were many groups trying to define the issue of immigration. "Structuring choice is rarely easy . . . there is competition to set the terms of debate over issues" (Edwards, 2003, p. 165). Simply put, achieving a framing effect is more difficult when there are competing frames at work (Brewer, 2003; Lee, McLeod, & Shah, 2008; Sniderman & Theriault, 2004; Zaller, 1992). The existence and increased intensity of competing frames erodes the ability of elites to clearly impact public perception (Druckman & Nelson, 2003; Zaller, 1992). When there is one major frame, the public often adapts and accepts the dominant frame. When elites disagree, and messages for and against are relatively even in number and intensity, the public has difficulty choosing between the two, which effectively neutralizes frames and reduces the movement of public opinion (Borrelli & Lockerbie, 2008; Brewer, 2003; Brewer & Gross, 2005; Druckman, 2001; Lee et al., 2008; Sniderman & Theriault, 2004).

For Bush, frame consistency and dominance would seem vital to the issue of immigration. If Bush could control the frame, he might reasonably expect some impact on the audience's understanding of immigration, and hence, on decision making. In contrast, loss of frame dominance and consistency would be a loss of his power to control an issue, a disastrous prospect for his attempt to persuade already skeptical conservatives. Thus, as Bush transitioned to discussing immigration in Irvine, we might thematically expect that an epic frame would motivate Bush to render the need for CIR as a security issue to be addressed by the heroic leader. Such a move could reassure the GOP of his credible decision-making capabilities while relying on the audience's primed expectations on his approach. It would fit well with the news media's history of framing of immigration during election years as an "us-versus-them" issue (Kim, 2007).

But Bush does not commit to an epic frame on immigration. Instead, Bush's attempt to persuade conservatives to embrace CIR relies on his ability to convince them that "They" (illegal immigrants) are not a threat to "Us" (American citizens). The choice seems rooted in policy: Bush's guest worker program would allow illegal foreign workers to stay in the United States—a plan at odds with Bush's security-based rhetorical strategy. Without an enemy, there are no rigors of war. Without rigors of war, there is no epic hero.

Certainly, Bush does attempt to retain some of the elements of the epic frame. He declares, "first and foremost, the federal government has the role to enforce our border. The American people are right in saying to the government, enforce the border" (Bush, 2006a, para. 27). He marks himself as the epic leader, "Listen, I was an old border governor. I understand it's important to enforce our border. And we

are" (Bush, 2006a, para. 27). He reviews the high-tech military equipment used to enforce the border, including infrared sensors, unmanned aerial vehicles, tank traps to prevent rapid border crossings, and more Border Patrol agents (Bush, 2006a, para. 28). In his later May 15 national address, he proposes sending 6,000 National Guard troops to the border (Bush, 2006b, para. 8). In this sense, Bush invokes his role as hero combating a major threat using the tools of war.

But, ironically, it is a role Bush immediately backs down from in Irvine. Despite claiming that "we got a strategy in place to make sure that this border is as tight as it possibly can be" (Bush, 2006a, para. 31), he acknowledges that enforcement efforts, that is, security operations, are inevitably doomed to fail. All of the technology, troops, and barriers he proposes are not enough to seal "a very long and difficult border" (Bush, 2006a, para. 28). Smugglers, uncooperative employers, and immigrants will go to "unbelievable lengths" to enter the country and conspire against enforcement. And Bush concedes that there is nothing that can be done to secure the nation from those illegal entrants already in the country: "Massive deportation of the people here is unrealistic. It's just not going to work" (Bush, 2006a, para. 39). Bush declares that "we want our Border Patrol hunting gun smugglers and dope runners" (Bush, 2006a, para. 37) rather dealing with undocumented workers. That is why he proposes a "rational, temporary worker plan that says you don't need to sneak across the border" (Bush, 2006a, para. 36). It would allow those currently in the United States illegally to "pay a penalty for being here illegally, commit him or herself to learn English, which is part of the American system and get in the back of the line" (Bush, 2006a, para. 43) but avoid deportation. Bush asserts that if workable alternatives to illegal crossing were provided, border security enforcement would again become possible.

Unfortunately, Bush has engaged in a mode of rhetoric that is at odds with own epic/security frame. Bush's problems begin at this definitional level. In attempting to convince conservatives to adopt immigration reform, Bush downplays the epic frame he effectively used in making the case for the War on Terror while embracing the complexity of immigration rather than simplifying it. Considering that the public delegates and demands that political elites unify events and symbols into singular themes and stories (Druckman, 2001; Edelman, 1988), it is unsurprising that conservatives were skeptical of, if not sour to, reform.

Moreover, audiences rely at least partially on the rhetorical tools given to them by the speaker to interpret speeches, particularly over time (Wolfe, 2007). Eschewing the epic-security frame on immigration, as demonstrated by his description of those crossing the border illegally as "decent, hardworking people" (Bush, 2006a, para. 34) who are coming to "feed their families" (Bush, 2006a, para. 31), highlights the internal tension of the speech. Bush's historical use of the epic frame, with its focus on foreign enemies and threats, makes it more difficult for the audience to associate and identify outsiders (foreigners) with Americans. Bush's rhetorical history and early performances indicate, by his own declaration, that an epic frame should be the core lens of the audience's evaluation. He even supports its application to immigration by indicating enforcement comes first. Yet Bush's guest-worker program declares border enforcement, and hence security, impossible.

In some sense, the internal difficulty of the Irvine speech is that if it is to succeed it requires the audience to embrace two entirely different worldviews. The audience must understand part of the world in

an epic frame, elucidating a simple, explicit and dangerous condition (a Scene) that demands the attention of a hero (Agent). The audience engages in the struggle and identifies with the leader who is familiar to the audience but stronger, more capable, more determined, although still one with the people in a common cause, in this case, against terrorism. But on immigration, they are asked to embrace another, more complex worldview, one at odds with media portrayals (Kim, 2007). Bush erodes his epic-security frame by refusing to identify security concerns, enemies, or threats to be conquered. He addresses immigration as a commercial concern (employers and workers), giving up the elements of sacrifice and courage found in the epic frame (Burke, 1937/1984) for what conservatives might see as lesser concerns. In fact, by refusing to find any real villains in the immigration debate (employers, immigrants, and government are not blamed for various reasons), Bush's thinking on immigration somewhat resembles Burke's comic frame of acceptance that pictures "people not as *vicious*, but as mistaken" (Burke, 1937/1984, p. 41). Once the initial border enforcement talk is discounted, Bush's depiction of immigration is uniquely civilized, refusing to place blame, to find enemies, or to find a root cause. Bush identifies symptoms and problems but nothing similar to an "Axis of Evil" or a "generational conflict" between good and evil. Perhaps this more nuanced view is more accurate, but it is deeply inconsistent with his general mode, and indeed, his own speech.

Frame Co-option in the Anti-CIR Campaign

Perhaps the most significant problem stemming from the tension between the epic and pseudo-comic frame are the vulnerabilities it creates for Bush's framing campaign. With already low poll numbers and facing an audience of hostile conservatives, Bush's attempt to create a coherent, appealing frame for immigration outside the bounds of his established security-based rhetorical presidency seems problematic from the start. His attempt was complicated by his effort to maintain his strong security frame on some issues but set it aside on CIR. The contradiction left Bush particularly vulnerable to attacks that deployed the security frame against him.

Much of the opposition to Bush's guest worker program, led by Tom Tancredo, a former House member (R-CO) and presidential also-ran in 2008, centered on the strategy of deploying Bush's security frame against immigration (Levin, 2005). Tancredo explicitly accepted Bush's self-positioning as the epic hero and then used the role against him, claiming Bush had set aside the security of nation by focusing on anything other than immediate border security (Tancredo, 2004). Tancredo made the arguments that the illegal smuggling and drug trades provide means by which terrorist organizations enter and attack the United States: "U.S. and Mexican authorities are well aware of suspected [terrorist] training camps, one of them . . . a few miles across the Rio Grande" (Tancredo, 2006b, para. 4). Given the terrorist threat, Tancredo urges an immediate 9/11-like war footing, "[Bush] needs to . . . federalize the National Guard in four border states to provide support to the beleaguered Border Patrol. He needs to say this will happen tomorrow morning, not next month or next year" (Tancredo, 2006a, para. 4). Tancredo employed the security frame to oppose the guest worker element of CIR, arguing that what "the President must do is explicitly separate the priority and necessity of secure borders from all other proposed federal legislation. Secure borders do not depend on a 'comprehensive' immigration reform package" (Tancredo, 2006a, para. 5).

Tancredo's strategy of capturing the Bush epic frame for immigration was based on the potential that the audience had internalized and was motivated by security concerns. He identified a simple, explicit, and dangerous condition (immigration) and demanded the leader address it by war-like action. He invoked the image of illegal immigrants disguised as terrorists and demanded the military stop them. But even beyond that, Tancredo (2006b) argued that inviting in illegal immigrants is to invite war because of the essential division between the American population (in its territory, citizens, and values) and the masses of non-Americans attempting to enter into American territory. The threat of immigrants to the dominance of the English language, their use of social services, and their unfamiliar cultural traditions become, like the threat of terrorism, threats to the security of the nation, joined together by the inherent danger that is presented by cultural and physical outsiders (Campbell, 1992).

And it may have worked. Ultimately CIR failed at least partially because conservatives failed to embrace Bush's depiction of immigration as a nonsecurity concern. By staking his authority in the security frame on terrorism/Iraq, Bush's ability to use other frames on other issues was deeply complicated. Tancredo, by framing illegal immigration and the guest worker plan as part of a threat to national security, stepped onto Bush's strategic rhetorical ground and undermined Bush's strategy by utilizing a frame Bush had himself privileged. As Speilvogel (2005) assesses, "symbolically, the war frame arouses and sustains fear and enmity toward others, thereby eroding the very conditions of progressive morality and making the values of empathy and compassion appear irrelevant to the objective of defeating an enemy" (p. 562). In Irvine, as in other places, Bush rested his symbolic authority on his ability to defend the nation. As such, a perception that he was unable to live up to his authority on immigration may have constituted a "symbolic Achilles' heel" (Scott, 1990, p. 105) in his ability to sell reform.

Rhetorical Benefits to Framing Research

In this article, we attempted to bring the two divergent tacks taken by rhetorical and social scientific traditions in framing scholarship a bit closer together. The goal is to establish the grounds for a methodological pluralism that would permit scholars from different backgrounds to utilize and appreciate the research of those outside their methodological tradition. As evidenced by some of the works cited here, rhetoric has much to contribute in theory and practice. Rhetoric can address issues of frame construction, liability, and audience motivation, indicate the sociological function of frames, take on singular cases, and investigate the full function of metaphor—work that often resists quantification. Although rhetorical frame analysis cannot determine causality within the statistical-empiricist framework, the linking of the rhetorical approach to social scientific efforts can shed light on what framing choices have been made, how and why those choices were made, and the limitations of such choices. This by no means replaces or obviates the need for social scientific research, but instead complements it.

To provide an example of how such research works, we identify three ways the case study highlights the contributions of rhetorical frame analysis.

First, the case study shows how rhetorical frame analysis can highlight where framing problems begin, work that is critical to understanding frame construction failures as well as why audiences may reject framing attempts. We argue that Bush was unable to concretely and appealingly frame immigration

both because of his framing actions on other issues and because his immigration arguments do not cohere to a consistent perspective or theme. In comparison, Tancredo achieves substantial resonance with the GOP, despite not having the same power and control of the media as the president, further indicating the weakness of Bush's framing strategy. While our rhetorical analysis of frame competition in a single speech is not congruent with standards of empirical social scientific research and our suggestions of generalizability to the whole campaign are not supported by statistical evidence—a type not available in this case—we base our analysis significantly in social scientific research and situational, textual, and historical evidence that backs our conclusions—conclusions we think scholars will find insightful and accurate. We believe this approach of employing social scientific research, examining how the rhetor (not the media) attempted to frame their message, and arguing for our probable conclusions points the way for both future rhetorical framing research and for social scientists seeking to understand its role— one that is focused on the text, its situation, its construction, and its implications.

Second, the case study shows that comparing the frame's symbolic strength to other similarly positioned frames in single case studies can shed light on the exigency of the frame and the rhetor, both of which impact how the audience views the frame. Much of frame research is concerned with understanding which framing labels matter and why (see Iyengar & Kinder, 1987; Nelson et al., 1997; Spielvogel, 2005), especially within partisan contexts (see Knoll et al., 2010; Lakoff, 2004). In general, such research argues that audiences perceive frames differently and frames affect the importance of an issue. Our analysis finds that by mixing elements of a pre-established epic frame and a comic frame, Bush fails at his attempt to translate previously effective labels to an issue with a skeptical conservative audience. Bush's ability to boil Iraq/War on Terror down to core American values and security within the confines of an epic battle between good and evil highlight his inability to find similar relationships in immigration, depriving CIR of the pull of the national security frame.

Third, rhetorical frame analysis enables scholars to understand competing frames and frame strategies. To be most effective, the rhetor's attempt to frame a specific issue must match the audience's frame. Bush's Irvine speech highlights, by contrast, effective and ineffective attempts to link a specific topic to attitudinal frame. Bush seems unaware of how the audience has been conditioned by his emphasis on security or of the perils of attempting to maintain two frames at once. Tancredo's responses, however, illustrate the advantage of possessing a clear, resonant framing effort, particularly one captured from a more powerful opponent. Because Bush, even as he did at Irvine, had himself privileged the vague threat of terrorism in his security frame, Tancredo's campaign merely had to make a plausible, but vague link from immigration to these issues to overwhelm the president's attempt to move the conversation on immigration away from security concerns. We do not argue that this is the whole story of the failure of CIR, but it is a significant part. By studying the persuasive appeals of the framing rhetor, future research can link attitudinal frames, general issue frames, and specific issue frames together in cohesive symbolic analysis.

We hope it is clear that there are grounds for joint purpose and methodological pluralism in framing research. Frame scholars have extensive theoretical agreement that holds us together, though different language and methods are used. But we can agree that the suasive effect of any particular message revolves around identification and division. Framing is not just the bending of messages, but the

association or disassociation of a given symbol with a field of other symbols (Burke, 1950/1969) understood through fields of prior experience (Goffman, 1974) in a way that impact what is assessed as *better* or *preferable* in decision making (Tversky & Kahnemann, 1981, 1986). Our studies—quantitative, qualitative, rhetorical—are bonded together by these common assumptions. That is ample ground for moving forward.

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