



5-14-2013

Why Words Matter: Framing Immigration in America

Kayla Harvey

Follow this and additional works at: http://vc.bridgew.edu/honors_proj



Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Harvey, Kayla. (2013). Why Words Matter: Framing Immigration in America. In *BSU Honors Program Theses and Projects*. Item 16.
Available at: http://vc.bridgew.edu/honors_proj/16
Copyright © 2013 Kayla Harvey

This item is available as part of Virtual Commons, the open-access institutional repository of Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Why Words Matter: Framing Immigration in America

Kayla Harvey

Submitted in Partial Completion for the
Requirements for Commonwealth Honors in Political Science
May 14, 2013

Dr. Kevin Donnelly, Thesis Director
Dr. Wendy Haynes, Committee Member
Dr. Jason Edwards, Committee Member

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction.....	3
II. Literature Review.....	14
III. Presidential Rhetoric & Immigration.....	37
IV. Rhetoric of Immigration in Arizona.....	58
V. Conclusion.....	72

Chapter I.

INTRODUCTION

The Policy Process and Role of Political Language

Public policy can be generally defined as a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives (Kraft and Furlong 2012:5). Essentially, public policy is defined as what government chooses to do or not do about public problems.

Public problems are the conditions that the public widely perceives to be unacceptable and therefore require some time of intervention. No matter the circumstances, the choice on whether to act or not depends on how the public defines the problem and on prevailing societal attitudes about the role of governmental action. The policy process model puts forth a logical sequence of actions that affect the development of public policies.

The first stage of the process is agenda setting. Agenda setting involves how problems are perceived and defined, command attention, and get onto the political agenda (Kingdon 1984: 12). If a problem does not gain the attention necessary for legislative action and the public and media cannot be persuaded to pay attention to it, the issue will likely go unaddressed. The second stage in the process is policy formulation. Formulation often involves the use of policy analysis, and is defined as the design and drafting of policy goals and strategies for achieving them. The third step in the policy process is policy legitimization, which is the mobilization of political support and formal enactment of policies, and includes the justification or rationales for the policy action. The fourth step is

policy implementation, which is the provision of institutional resources for putting the programs into effect within the bureaucracy. The fifth stage is policy and program evaluation. This step involves the measurement and assessment of policy and program effects, including success or failure. Lastly, the policy change step involves modification of policy goals and means in light of new information or shifting political environment (Kraft and Furlong 2011).

Language plays a crucial role in this policy process, in particular the agenda setting stage, as it is essential to human interaction and communication. It is used to persuade or dissuade, manipulate, or express ideas (Lakoff 2002:15). Political language helps to explain why a problem moves from the private realm to the public realm, and shapes solutions that emerge from discussions of policy issues. For example, issues gain saliency and make their way onto the national agenda, through problem definition, framing and policy narratives (Kraft and Furlong 2011: 17). In order for an issue to gain more attention, it must first be defined and widely accepted as a public problem. Defining a problem and determining its causes are not easy tasks, and reflects a number of different perspectives. Problem definition comes with certain biases. In *Policy Paradox* (2002), Deborah Stone states:

Problem definition is a matter of representation because every description of a situation is a portrayal from only one of many points of view. Problem definition is strategic because groups, individuals, and government agencies deliberately and consciously fashion portrayals so as to promote their favored course of action.

Essentially, a person's perspective, ideological leanings, and background determine how they define a problem and relate to it. Ideologies and values influence how the problem is

defined or even if an individual considers a situation to be a problem at all. However, simply defining a problem is not enough, the public, media, and policymakers must recognize the problem is important enough for a legislative action. Issues are constantly competing for public attention; some problems make it onto to the national agenda, others do not, and some enter in the spotlight for a short time and then fade away. A problem has a decent chance of reaching agenda status if the issue can be attached to some sort of focusing event that brings greater attention to it (Kingdon 1984: 13). Also, the political climate and proposed policy solutions play a role in whether or not an issue has the opportunity to reach agenda status. If an issue does not receive the necessary attention; chances are that little to no governmental action will be taken to address that problem (Kraft and Furlong 2011: 14).

The Relevance of Immigration in Today's Political Arena

The terrorist attacks off September 11, 2001 contributed to the immigration issue emerging on the national political agenda. In the weeks following the attacks, it was revealed that the hijackers had entered the country through legally issued visas which prompted revisiting to the ways in which the United States handles issues of immigration. The George W. Bush Administration promptly created the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), a new executive agency charged with protecting and securing the U.S. from further threats to national security. With the creation of DHS came an entire redesign of the office of Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS). INS was moved from the

jurisdiction of the Department of Justice and divided into three separate agencies with minor overlaps in power: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). These three new agencies were transferred the jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security. Soon after these new agencies were created all issues of immigration began to be reexamined, including the issue of individuals entering the country without proper documentation (Migration Policy Institute 2011: 11). Along with the new focus on border protection, the Bush Administration began to focus on the issue of immigration as well. President Bush began to advocate and campaign for comprehensive immigration reform. Any legislative action taken during the Bush administration provided little groundbreaking change in the area of immigration—both sides of the aisle were unable to agree on a comprehensive reform framework and the issue of immigration largely moved out of the national spotlight until 2010.

In April 2010, the Arizona state legislature passed the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act or S.B. 1070. At the time of the Act's passage, it was the broadest and strictest anti-immigration law enacted in the last two decades (Migration Policy Institute 2010: 12). After the law's passage, many other states, such as Alabama, Utah, South Carolina, and Georgia began to enact their own versions of the S.B. 1070. This policy was controversial because it gave authority to state and local law enforcement to check the immigration status of anyone during routine traffic stops and it prompted large public protests from within the state and from pro-immigration supporters

in neighboring states and across the country regarding the potential for civil rights violation and racial profiling. The Arizona law and other state immigration policies garnered national attention and raised questions as to who should be left responsible for immigration policy, the states or the federal government, and what the role of government should be in addressing the problems associated with existing immigration policies.

In July 2010, the Department of Justice took up the case in Arizona's district court, citing that the law violated the powers of Congress and federal preemption (Fronteras 2012: 1). A district court judge upheld the DOJ's claims and placed an injunction on the main provisions of S.B. 1070, including the most controversial provision that allowed local law enforcement the right to check the immigration status during arrests and routine traffic stops (Ibid. 3). Arizona then appealed the law to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals which upheld the lower court's injunction. Then in 2011, Arizona appealed their case directly to the Supreme Court. In June 2012, the Supreme Court handed down their final ruling on the fate of S.B. 1070. The Court shot down all provisions of the law, except for the provision that allowed for Arizona state police to investigate the immigration status of an individual stopped, detained, or arrested if there is reasonable suspicion that individual is in the country illegally (*Arizona v. United States* 567, 2013).

The Court noted that the main provision of S.B. 1070 is compliant with ICE's 287g immigration enforcement policy which allows a state and local law enforcement entity to enter into a partnership with ICE, under a joint agreement, in order to receive delegated authority for immigration enforcement within their jurisdictions (Department of Homeland

Security 2011: 1). Essentially, once a local or state entity enters the partnership with ICE, law enforcement officers have access to immigration databases and are able to check the immigration status of those in custody.

By this time Barack Obama had served one term as president, and was facing a reelection challenge by the Republican presidential candidate, Mitt Romney, both of whom focused on the issue through their campaign during the latter half of 2012. After a vigorous campaign, President Obama was reelected to office and made immigration reform a priority for his administration. Since then, there have been many steps taken to work towards reaching a solution on comprehensive immigration reform. For example, in November 2012, a bipartisan senate committee, dubbed the “Gang of Eight,” developed a list of the requirements necessary to reform America’s immigration system (Khimmm 2012:1).

The following study will look back on the development of immigration reform policy through the lens of political language, focusing on the debate in Arizona and crucial role played by Presidents Bush and Obama. As the debate continues to rage in to 2013 this reflective account is aimed at explaining how the issue has evolved over time, illustrating the influence of political language, and adding insight to the politics that surround the issue today.

Nature of Study/Methods

This study includes the use of the case study method in order to best achieve the aforementioned objectives. Case studies help researchers to assess and understand complex social phenomena. Robert Yin (2003: 13-14) defines case studies in this manner:

A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. The case study inquiry relies on multiple sources of evidence, and benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

Through this method researchers are able to gain a holistic understanding of the problem at hand, which gives a greater understanding to a certain phenomena (Ibid. 12). There are several different types of analysis that allow researchers to examine certain areas, including experiments, surveys, archival analyses, historical analyses, and, of course, the case study. When choosing a research strategy, the investigator looks at the type of research question being posed, the extent of control and investigator has over behavioral events, and the degree of focus placed on contemporary events. Case studies, also, generally answer how and why questions about contemporary sets of events over which the investigator has little control.

Case studies were used in this study because of the nature of the research project at hand. With the overarching goal of investigating how language impacts the policy process, it is important to recognize that political language is highly nuanced and subjective. Therefore, this study explored various dimensions of political language including problem definition, framing, and the use of metaphors. Those dimensions were best explored

through interviews, participatory observation, and content analysis. These strategies added depth and richness to the study.

There are, however, many issues with case study methods of analysis. For instance, case studies are sometimes criticized for not being adequately rigorous or empirical. There is also the belief that generalization, or the ability to make inferences about all similar phenomena based on a few cases, is not possible when studying only a select case or small number of cases. This ability to generalize is a concern, but it is argued that the insights gathered through this research project are applicable beyond the scope of the selected cases. This is because language is not tied to a particular institution, policy area, or level of government. In fact, this theoretical lens has been applied to a number of issue debates including AIDS policymaking, the war on drugs, and sexual harassment and produced similar insights (Rochefort and Cobb 1994).

For this study, there were several case studies that could have been undertaken including the relationship between the federal and state governments regarding immigration policies, or the role of private prison corporations and other interest groups lobbying against certain areas of immigration. However, this study focuses on the cases of S.B. 1070 in Arizona and the role of President Bush and President Obama in the debate over immigration reform—the former being selected because of Arizona’s distinction as “ground zero” for the contemporary immigration debate, and the latter chosen because of the preeminent role of the U.S. president when it comes to the potential to shape national discourse.

Two Case Studies

The first case study focuses on the evolution of the S.B. 1070 in Arizona from the bill's introduction in the state legislature in 2010 to the 2012 Supreme Court decision. An examination of articles and editorials related to the issue published in two major state newspapers—*The Arizona Republic* and *The Arizona Daily Star*—provided an intimate look into the linguistic dimension of the emerging immigration debate. The articles and editorials also provided a window into seeing how citizens of Arizona were being presented the issue of immigration at that point in time. Through a frame analysis, newspaper articles were coded and quantified according to the positive, negative, or neutral presentation of the issue. This study also included the use of participant observation and interviews to better understand the complex social and political dimensions of the debate. The utilization of both qualitative and quantitative methods provided a better understanding of the nuances of this policy debate within the state of Arizona.

The second case study focuses on the language used by Presidents Bush and Obama as it related to immigration reform policy. In particular, this case emphasizes the metaphors about immigrants and immigration used by both presidents in public statements made during their respective tenures as Commander-in-Chief. Both Bush and Obama were in office around critical flashpoints in the debate over immigration policy, including the terrorist attacks of September 11th and the passage of S.B. 1070 in Arizona. The primary mode of study was a content analysis of major addresses delivered by each

president, as well as transcripts from Sunday morning talk show appearances. For instance, the State of the Union address was a major area of focus because the president will often frame and outline his legislative goal to the public in this speech. Sunday morning talk shows are also important because they are primarily geared towards those in the beltway of the political arena. It is essential to focus on the role of the president because he is a key figure in shaping the national agenda, and is uniquely positioned in American politics to focus the public's attention on a particular issue (Kernell 2006: 11).

Before getting into the depth of these two case studies, it is first important to review the literature on political language as it relates to the policy process. These works help to outline the role that language takes on in the political arena and the emergence of this particular area of study within the field of public policy.

Works Cited

Arizona v. United States. 567. 2013

Fronteras Desk. "Brief History of S.B. 1070." 2012.

<http://www.fronterasdesk.org/sb1070/>.

Kernell, Samuel. *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*. N.p.: CQ Press, 2006.

Khimm, Suzy. "The Gang of Eight is Back. Will it Matter?." The Washington Post. November 2012. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2012/10/09/the-gang-of-six-nay-eight-is-back-will-it-matter/>.

Kingdon, John. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. : Longman Publishing Group, 1984.

Kraft, Michael, and Scott Furlong. *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives*. 4th ed. N.p.: CQ Press, 2013.

Lakoff, George. *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Migration Policy Institute. "New Arizona Law Engulfs Immigration Debate." May 2010. <http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/display.cfm?ID=782>.

Migration Policy Institute. "Through the Prism of National Security: Major Immigration Policy and Program Changes In the Decade Since 9/11." August 2011. http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/FS23_Post-9-11policy.pdf.

Rocheftort, David, and Roger Cobb, eds. *The Politics of Problem Definition: Shaping the Policy Agenda*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1994.

Stone, Deborah. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. N.p.: W.W. Norton & Co, 2001.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. "Fact Sheet: Delegation of Immigration Authority Section 287(g) Immigration and Nationality Act." 2011. <http://www.ice.gov/news/library/factsheets/287g.htm>.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language is essential to human interaction and communication. It is used to persuade or dissuade, manipulate, or express ideas. Language is especially essential in the political arena. Political language helps to explain why a problem moves from the private realm to the public realm, and shapes solutions that emerge from discussions of policy issues. The purpose of this literature review is explain how an issue gains saliency and makes its way onto the national agenda, through problem definition, framing and policy narratives.

Agenda Setting Models

For decades, policy scholars have studied the authoritative decisions made at various levels of government and how an idea becomes a bill and eventually, public law. Until the 1980s there was no clear effort to explain how certain issues garnered public attention and others did not. Scholars began to look at how ideas form into public problems that constituents, legislators, the media, and other political actors were talking about, and how those problems reached agenda status (Kingdon 2006:19).

There are two types of agendas: public and formal (Baumgartner and Jones 1991: 12). The public agenda is what the public is talking about. Issues and problems taken up in the public agenda are not necessarily being taken up at the local, state, and national issues. The formal agenda is what the branches of government are actively working on. Agendas are essential because they help to organize and tackle the constant demands that are

streaming into the offices of government officials. The natural prioritization of these issues is what makes up the agenda.

In response to the open question regarding how an issue reaches the formal agenda, John W. Kingdon (2006) developed the three streams theory, which states that in order for an issue to achieve agenda status three streams, comprised of problems, policies, and politics, must converge in order for a “window of opportunity” to emerge that gives an issue saliency and agenda status. Kingdon’s theory assesses rapid changes to the formal agenda by explaining how issues suddenly shift from being relatively unknown to a priority legislative agenda item.

According to Kingdon, in order for an issue to first be seen as important and worthy of agenda status, it must first be defined as a problem. He further explains that problems are identified through several ways, the first being indicators. Indicators are used to explicitly define an issue as a problem, and they may come in many forms. They are not used to determine whether or not a problem exists, because that is left up to interpretation. Rather, decision makers use indicators in two ways: “to assess the magnitude of a problem and to become aware of changes in a problem” (Kingdon, 2006: 91). Changes in indicators alert policy makers to a change in the system and, therefore, help to determine if they will view the issue as a problem. The public’s behavior towards an issue and their reaction to an indicator can have exaggerated effects on the policy agenda. Problems are not self-evident from indicators, sometimes there needs to be a push to give attention to an issue from people in and around government. The interpretation of indicators by decision makers and the general public is more complicated than just a general statement of the facts.

Much of the determination of whether or not a particular issue is given agenda status depends on what Kingdon refers to as a “focusing event,” such as a disaster, crisis, or even a release of alarming data or statistics. Focusing events are only important if they reinforce preconceived perceptions of a particular issue or problem. Focusing events and flashpoints give saliency to issues and help give a perceived problem agenda status. For instance, the terrorist attacks of September 11th, and the fact that the hijackers entered the country with legally issued visas, helped to bring the issue of immigration reform to the forefront of the nation’s political agenda.

Next is Kingdon’s policy stream. Once a problem is recognized, there has to be policy ideas and alternatives that are put forth to solve the issue at hand. Proposals generated are debated, redrafted and accepted for serious consideration. Kingdon proposes that policy selection is a process in which a large number of policy options are narrowed to a few feasible solutions that are seriously considered. Much of the policy process takes place in small communities that are tightly knit or fragmented. Getting policy communities to accept a new idea or proposal takes time. Policy entrepreneurs, or “people who are willing to invest resources into of various kinds in hopes of a future return in terms of policies they favor,” utilize political language in order to soften up the public and policy communities. The policy stream helps to create a short list of proposals and viable alternatives. The broad acceptance of a policy solution facilitates a problem’s placement on the legislative agenda.

The third stream and final stream in Kingdon’s model is the political stream. In order for an issue to gain agenda status, there must be the political will to act on proposed policies and alternatives. The political stream can work independently from the problem

and policy streams, according to its own dynamics and rules. This stream is an important, either as a facilitator or inhibitor, of an issue reaching agenda status. Once an issue has garnered saliency and agenda status, the government enters the picture, and tries to bend outcomes and alternatives in their favor.

The streams of politics, problems, and policies come together at certain critical times. Solutions are joined to problems, and both of them are joined to favorable political forces. When this coupling occurs, a “window of opportunity” opens to push pet proposals or one’s own conceptions of a problem through.

Kingdon’s agenda setting model remains the standard for explaining rapid change in the formal agenda. Frank Baumgartner and Bryan Jones (2009) proposed a model that took a macro approach to agenda-setting called the “punctuated equilibrium model” based on the “emergence and recessions of policy issues from the political agenda” (p. 2). Their model helps to explain how certain issues gain saliency at certain times, then fade from the public spotlight, and suddenly emerge back onto the agenda. Baumgartner and Jones argue that an issue can reemerge onto the public agenda, and punctuate the equilibrium, when something happens to alter its “policy image.” This model is based off of the notion that policy making is incremental, and that new and rapid changes to policies are not continually adopted.

As Baumgartner and Jones argue, the American political system is highly disaggregated and is built upon policy subsystems and policy images. When new issues emerge, there are institutional structures that are put in place that work to create equilibrium in the political system. Policy subsystems are the network of politically engaged experts and interest groups that make sure that the system stays stable for quite

some time. Every part of a policy subsystem has a vested interest in establishing a policy monopoly. Policy monopolies are based on political understandings of a social problem and the institutional structures that reinforce that understanding. Actors in a political subsystem work to construct a positive image in order to keep their policy monopoly in place. How a policy is viewed and discussed is its policy image. Policy monopolies are supported by a positive policy image and the rejection of any competing interests or policy. The policy subsystem will not break down until the image of a policy changes. Rhetorical strategies are often employed to keep certain policy images in place. A policy monopoly will break down only when the policy image changes.

Baumgartner and Jones's punctuated equilibrium model helps to explain change within complex social systems. The punctuated equilibrium model postulates that policy changes only occur incrementally, due to various forces that promote stability including the makeup of institutions and the vested interests in a particular policy outcome. Equilibrium will be punctuated and policy changes will occur when there are changes to these interests, institutions, and other forces, such as a change in the party in control of government and public opinion. Essentially, public policy is known for long periods of stability and change only occurs when a large and less frequent shift in society of government takes place.

We know from these preeminent works that language plays a major role in helping to create establish the formal legislative agenda, and focus the public's attention to certain issues. Rhetorical concepts such as problem definition, framing, and political narrative, help researchers to better assess and understand language as it is used in the political arena, and how it may impact the policy process by orienting lawmakers, the public, and other political actors toward certain perceptions of social issues and concerns.

Problem Definition

E.E. Schattschneider (1974) famously outlined the links between social conflict, the creation of issues, and government response, and was the first to note the importance of problem definition. Schattschneider defines our political system as a competitive pluralist system. He also argues that conflict is the root of all political action. Outcomes of every conflict are determined by the extent to which the audience becomes involved in it. The scope of a conflict is an aspect of the sale of the political organization and the extent of political competition. At the heart of every conflict are those who are actively engaged in it and the audience that surrounds to watch. The audience is an integral part of any conflict because their support is essentially the outcome. The ability to change the scope of a conflict alters the conflict itself.

A critical aspect to the scale of attention an issue receives is public support, which can be altered depending on how a problem is defined. Schattschneider argues that the audience to a conflict essentially determines the outcomes by the support they show for one alternative or another. "The definition of alternatives is the supreme instrument of power" in our system because it allows for the choice of conflicts and the choice of conflict allocates power (p. 66).

Building on Schattschneider's work, David Rochefort and Roger Cobb (1994) examined more closely the categories of problem definition discourse. They focused on five areas of discussion that are often employed by problem definers when discussing social issues. One of these areas is problem *causality*. Certain problems can be defined simply and other problems have more complex definitions and explanations. Problems of a narrow focus with on one or two particular causes signal that the problem definer is ready for

action. Problems with fewer causal explanations may be easier for the audience to digest and see the need for some kind of legislative action. More complex problems may “represent a strategy to head off prompt response” (17). Depending on the circumstances, however, more complex problems may represent a more sophisticated policy endeavor, and might have a better chance of building support and attention from the public. It is important to note that eminent solutions may happen for some types of issues, and also that some issue may stall regardless of the level of causal complexity.

Problem *severity* is another aspect of problem definition, often used as a strategy to explain how serious a problem and its consequences might be. This element of problem definition is essential to garnering support from the public and the media, and is a highly contentious definition area. For example, the severity of the immigration problem is often debated and the solutions that are offered from both sides of the aisle are representative of the differences in how severe the issue is defined to be. Severity also communicates that an issue has crossed a threshold and is in need of government intervention to ameliorate the change.

Similar to Schattschneider’s concept of scope, *incidence* is a descriptive dimension of problem definition identified by Rochefort and Cobb that represents the amount of people affected by a problem. Showcasing the number of people who are affected by a particular social problem can help the problem definer win support for a solution in order to ameliorate the number of incidences. *Novelty* is another dimension of problem definition. When issues are defined as unprecedented, trailblazing or novel, it can win the issue attention or as the novelty wanes the issue can lose attention. *Proximity* characterizes the issue as close to home or directly impinging on one’s interests. The closer an issue is to an

individual and their current situation, then the audience is more likely to see the issue at hand as a problem.. Lastly, Rochefort and Cobb identify *crisis* as another important aspect of problem definition. Crisis is perhaps the most commonly used term in the political arena. It alerts the audience to a special condition of severity that is long overdue and action must be taken immediately. Defining problems as crises and emergencies signal the need for quick action, but as the authors note, the action might not always be adequate enough to solve the problem. These rhetorical concepts outlined by Rochefort and Cobb furthered the pioneering work of Schattschneider and constitute crucial analytical tools for dissecting and examine the language used by political actors.

Deborah Stone (2002) outlined several causal strategies that political actors often use to help to assign responsibility to particular sources, legitimize possible political action, or challenge or protect existing social order. In politics, causes are used to demonstrate the possibility of human control over a given contribution. By assigning responsibility to certain actors, the intended audience is able to assume that the issue at hand can be solved with a given policy option. One causal strategy identified by Stone is to show that the problem is caused by an accident of nature or fate. The strategy can be used to explain incidences such as natural disasters or machinery that may have run amok. Problems with these types of causes are accidental and unintentional, and therefore no one can be directly to blame. Rather, this type of strategy shows the necessity of some type of action that needs to be taken. Another strategy is to show that a problem formerly interpreted as an accident is really the result of human agency. Problems defined by these causes are seen as inadvertent due to ignorance, carelessness or recklessness, which all result from human agency. Another causal strategy is to show that the effects of an action were secretly

caused by the actor. Here problems are defined as intentional and are often coupled with stories of oppressors and victims to exacerbate that fact. Stone points to the example of the immigration debate, supporters of undocumented individuals are that the state of illegal immigration is the way it is because of poor policy choices made by legislators and bureaucrats that support permissive policies for agriculture. In essence, problems with immigration were caused by policy makers who support business practices that rely on migrant and undocumented workers. A fourth causal strategy is to show that the low-probability effects of an action were accepted as a calculated risk by the actor. Here causes are defined as mechanical and will always have certain consequences that must be accepted. A final causal strategy outline by Stone is to show that the problem is so complex that only large scale policy changes can alter cause.

Causal strategies, much like problem definition strategies, are often used to control images, perceptions, and interpretations of difficulties. Political actors employ many causal strategies to describe harms and difficulties, attribute them to the actions of other individuals and organizations, and thus will compel government intervention to stop the problem. For researchers, Stone's work further refines the degree to which political language, and its implications, can be examined and understood.

Another powerful strategy employed by problem definers is measurement (Stone 2002:33). Policy discussions often begin with talk of numbers that show a problem that is big, growing, or both. But the notion of measurement is more complicated than that. First, people react to being counted or measured, and try to "look good" on the measure. Second, the process of counting something makes people notice it more. Third, counting can be used to stimulate demands for change. Next, when measurement is explicitly used to

evaluate performance, the people being evaluated try to manipulate their scores. Measurers have a lot of discretion when it comes to employing numbers, and it is their discretion of what and how to count. Also, measuring creates alliances between the measurers and the measured. Lastly, the problem definer will attempt to control how others interpret the numbers. Numbers, also, work like metaphors. Counting is just like analogizing in metaphors in the sense that one feature of something is selected and all other features or factors are ignored. In short, measurement is an inherently political process and is used regularly by problem definers when they are trying to get an issue onto the agenda.

Not all problem definition language focuses on finding solutions to social problems. In his work, *The Rhetoric of Reaction* (1991), Albert Hirschman outlines rhetoric used to get an item *off* of the agenda and to deter attention from a particular issue or problem in his “Three Reactions Thesis.” The first type of reactionary rhetoric is what Hirschman calls perversity. Reactionaries will not try to propose an alternative solution, rather they will conclude that a proposed action will have implications that are *contrary* to what is intended. A common set-up of perversity arguments look like this: “*the attempt to push society in a certain direction will result in it moving alright, but in the opposite direction*” (p. 12). The second type of reactionary rhetoric is futility. In futility arguments, attempts to change are seen as abortive; any government action of intervention will ultimately fail because structures are so solidly in place. The last type of reactionary rhetoric is jeopardy. The jeopardy thesis asserts that the proposed changes involve unacceptable costs or consequences in one form or another. Basically, the proposed solution will jeopardize and have drastic effect on other programs. Jeopardy, futility and perversity

arguments make up the bulk of political assault on proposed actions and solutions to problems. This framework is applicable in when a problem's agenda status, not the proposed solution, is the focus of intense debate attention.

Symbols and Metaphors

Symbolism is an additional component of political language that garners considerable scholarly attention. Murray Edelman (1964) tackled the use of symbols in political discourse, in his seminal work *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*. Edelman divided symbols into two groups: referential and condensation. Referential symbols refer to facts and tangible items. These symbols are useful because they help to logically analyze and think about a given situation. For example, industrial accident statistics make talking about occupational safety policies more straightforward. Referential symbols are also used to frame issues and define the incidence or scope of the problem. Condensation symbols evoke emotions associated with a given situation. These symbols are more abstract and come in the form of slogans, phrases, and images. These symbols help to condense policy issues and introduce alternatives and solutions. For example in the 1980s, a popular symbol was of the "welfare queen" or a woman who abused and lived off of the welfare system. This image of the "welfare queen" prompted the public and lawmakers to push for major reforms and cuts to the social welfare systems.

Metaphors are an implied comparison and are important devices for strategic representation in policy analysis (Stone 2002). Machines and mechanical devices are the basis for many policy metaphors. These metaphors are derived from the idea that items in the political realm must be in balance or order. For instance, when one looks at the issue of

nuclear terror, many problem definers argue that there is a “balance of terror,” meaning that mutual fear prevents either side from taking action. Another common policy metaphor is one of wedges and inclines. The metaphor of a wedge implies that a small beginning can have enormous leverage. On the other hand, the image of an incline implies that something drawn on a downward path will be drawn further downward by gravity. Incline metaphors are accompanied with slippery slope arguments, which imply that one action, will lead to a series of even worse actions. Wedge and incline metaphors contain stories warning of future decline, and the implied solution is that policy should avoid the first move in order to prevent the inevitable push in an unwanted direction. Another set of policy metaphors are based on containers and the idea of fixed space. Container metaphors deal with a perception of underflow and overflow. A problem could be that there is an overflow. For instance, it is often stated that Mexicans “spill over” the borders onto the United States. Or the problem could be that the space is not full enough or empty, as in when a politician “vacates” a position. Lastly, another set of policy metaphors are disease metaphors. Disease metaphors imply stories about disease and decline. Cults, communism, crime or any behavior or sets of ideas one wants to condemn is said to “spread.” Stone points out that the most pervasive of disease metaphors lies in the idea that the poor and disadvantaged have some type of pathology that keeps them where they are. The problems of homelessness, poverty, and drug addiction are seen as outcomes of personal deficiencies and choices rather than structural policy problems. Thus, metaphors are pervasive and emotionally compelling, and help to define problems.

Framing

Our reality, and that of the political arena, is complex and often difficult to comprehend. Political leaders, problem definers and citizens make concerted efforts to narrow their perception of reality in order to make it more comprehensible. Framing refers to “the effects of presentation on judgment and choice” (Iyengar 1996: 61). The framing perspective highlights the key tenets of problem definition, which is to define problem causality and create alternatives and solutions by which to act upon. Framing, however, goes a step further and encompasses the broader ideological and cultural elements of social problems to conceptualize issues based on one’s worldview (Lakoff 2002: 375).

Erving Goffman, in his book *Frame Analysis* (1986), developed an approach to framing called the framing analytic approach. Goffman utilized framing as a way to isolate what is occurring within different perspectives. Frame analysis essentially refers to the examination of the “organization of experience” (10). Frameworks are the tool for meaning making and discovery. According to Goffman, there are several goals and effects associated with frameworks. Frames are used to explain all events, push the limits of explanation, produce unforeseen consequences, and to learn competence in actions. Goffman also points out another aspect of frameworks which is keying. Keying is a means of understanding a framework in terms of another. Keys act as a frame metaphor. Goffman pulls examples from play in order to illustrate this concept. For instance, play fighting can be mistaken as such because it borrows many devices from fighting in an almost metaphorical manner. The same goes for immigration, when anti-immigrant problem definers frame immigration, they sometimes refer to unauthorized immigrants as “aliens” as an attempt to further explain how they are intruding on “our soil.” While, immigrants

are not aliens, the key further helps to create an understandable context for the problem definer's audience.

As Robert Entman (1993) points out, framing essentially involves both "selection and salience" (52). To frame is to "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient...in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and recommendation of a solution for the item described" (52). Therefore framing helps to diagnose, evaluate, and prescribe remedies for various social problems. Entman argues that framing performs four functions: they determine what a causal agent is doing, which is usually measured in terms of common cultural values; they identify the forces creating the problem; they evaluate causal agents and their effects; and, lastly, frames offer and justify remedies for particular problems and predict their likely effects. A frame can include one or more of these functions at one time. For example, following the terrorist attacks of September 11th some lawmakers began to define the issue of unauthorized immigration by couching it in terms of national security. In the months following the attack, it was discovered that the hijackers came into the U.S. legally obtained visas. With the addition of these new details, the Bush administration began to take major steps to crack down and reform the current immigration system. The office of Immigration and Naturalization Services was moved from the Department of justice to the newly created, Department of Homeland Security and divided into three new offices: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). With the creation of these new offices, the government gained greater control over the borders and began to work to eradicate the country of unauthorized immigrants. Issues surrounding immigration

continue to be defined in terms of national security and the solutions generated by lawmakers are often related to border enforcement.

How issues are framed is closely related to the worldview of the individual or group defining the problem. In his book, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think* (2002), George Lakoff argues that the moral categories of liberals and conservatives help to shape the way social problems are perceived and defined. Lakoff helps to define the concept of framing through the “nation as a family” metaphor, which he applies to the liberal and conservative worldviews. In this model, the government is viewed as parents, the citizens as children, and the nation as a family. These models help to explain how problem definers and intended audiences make sense of complex realities. According to Lakoff, the conservative rationale is built upon the Strict Father model. The major tenets of this model are that citizens need to become more self-reliant and self-disciplined, and that society is based around rewards and punishments delivered by the government, or Strict Father. Strict Father Morality assigns the highest priorities to self-control and self-discipline and obedience to authority. How a problem is defined and the solutions generated from that definition coming from the conservative standpoint will more often than not be based on these tenets. For instance, conservatives are not inclined to support many social welfare programs for fear that the individuals using those programs will become too dependent on the government. The liberal rationale is built upon the Nurturant Parent model. The major tenets of this model are built around the ideas of compassion and respect. This model assigns highest priorities to empathy and helping others. Lakoff states that in order to help others, “one must take care of oneself and nurture social ties” (35). Like the Strict Father model, problem definitions and solutions

being generated from the liberal viewpoint will be based off of this model and its core tenets. For instance, liberals are inclined to support many social welfare programs because they believe it is important for the government to offer assistance to citizens in need.

While Lakoff's model thoroughly explains how liberals and conservatives make sense of certain problems, there are cases where this model may not be the norm. For example, in the case of immigration policy the traditional feelings towards "big government" are reversed. It is often noted that liberals are in favor of a "big government" by which the government at all levels plays an important role in the lives of its citizens through social welfare and other programs. Conservatives, on the other hand, want the government to play less of a role in the lives of citizen. In the current debate over immigration reform, many conservatives favor policies where the government plays a major role at all levels in dealing with enforcement, detainment, and deportation. Many liberals want the government to play a less invasive role in the lives of undocumented workers and unauthorized immigrants, through less enforcement and more supportive pathway to citizenship programs.

Narrative

Similar to problem definition and framing, narrative helps to provide another perspective to agenda setting models in politics. Narrative is viewed as a device that brings order and meaning to a given situation. Patterson and Monroe (1996: 315) define narrative as "the stories people tell to weave disparate facts together in a cognitive way to make sense of reality." Essentially, narrative is a story that has a plot, characters, and a setting. They employ many rhetorical strategies including metaphors, synecdoche, symbolism and

figure language to exacerbate a point (Stone 2002). Narratives are created in order to understand the political realities around us.

Narrative analysis focuses on stories as a means for representing reality, and they include common elements of traditional, literary narratives (Patterson and Monroe 1998). Events are outlined in a sequential order in an effort to coherently explain a problem's origin and development. Policy narratives include a point of view, which is the speaker's perspective of what is important and integral to the story. Finally, there are characters of actors, who are usually portrayed in the roles of heroes, villains, and victims. Definitions of policy problems usually have a beginning, middle and an end. Two broad story lines are most common in policy narratives (Stone 2002). The first is the story of decline, which according to Stone, run like this "In the beginning things were good. But they got worse, and right now they are nearly intolerable; something must be done" (158). This story usually ends with the prediction of a crisis and some sort of proposal to avoid the crisis. Proposals can even take the form of a warning that unless some action is taken, the problem will only get worse. Stories of decline, typically, include facts and figures to show how a problem has gotten worse. There are several variations to stories of decline including stymied progress and change is an illusion stories. Stymied progress stories explain that positive change in an area is being undone. Change is an illusion stories focus on the idea that despite appearances, the problem or current reality is actually worse or better despite common belief.

Another common type of policy story centers on helplessness and control. Stories of control center on problems or issues that are typically thought of to be beyond any kind of social intervention, but in fact can be changed through various policy actions. Common

types of stories of control are the blame the victim story and the conspiracy story. Blame the victim stories seek to explain a given problem by suggesting that people affected by an issue have, in fact, brought it upon themselves. Conspiracy stories center on the idea that powerful entities have been controlling certain situations in order to gain some sort of advantage. Whatever the motive behind a story, all stories include various metaphors and symbols to illustrate the depth of the issue. Stories are intended to drive the audience to a course of action.

Stories are constructed to make a point and propose certain remedies for various policy problems. Fischer (2003) argues that policy narratives are centered on the concept of human intention and seek to construct the social meaning of a given situation. Fischer also states that “the narrative is especially geared towards the goals of the actors and the way changing goals and intentions causally contribute to social change; it seeks to comprehend and convey the direction of human affairs” (163). Narratives are based off of the objections and point of view of the storyteller. Well-constructed narratives will aid the audience in sifting through various, and oftentimes, conflicting opinions, facts, and stories. Policy narratives also help to shed light on the fact that it is possible to ameliorate a situation through various proposed policy actions, usually those actions favored by the storyteller. Storytelling increases our conceptual knowledge about a given situation beyond just facts and figures by embedding how individuals are oriented in society.

Jones and McBeth (2010) introduced an empirical way to analyze narratives called the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF). NPF is a “quantitative, structuralist, and positivistic approach to the study and theory building of policy narratives” (2010: 339). This framework pulls together postpositivist concepts and positivist standards of evaluation to

create “more productive debates over how stories influence public policy” (340). NPF accounts for all of the fundamental elements of narrative including setting, plot, character, and the moral of the story or policy solutions and the overall content of the story based on ideologies and cultural contexts.

Jones and McBeth then argue that these inputs can be used to study narratives at the micro and meso levels. Empirical research of narratives at the micro level is concerned with explaining how policy narratives impact public opinion. Therefore, research would center on the evaluation of how narratives persuade individuals. Several causal strategies utilized in policy narratives help to influence and aggregate public opinion. The first of these strategies is canonicity and breach. Canonicity is referred to as the state of normalcy, or the idea that things are where they should be. Stories can shatter canonicity by changing the way we view the world and breach the norm. Jones and McBeth hypothesize that as a narrative’s level of breach increases; the individual who is exposed to that narrative is more likely to be persuaded. The second causal strategy is narrative transportation. Narrative transportation describes the audience’s involvement with the story’s protagonists. The authors hypothesize that as narrative transportation increases; the individual who is exposed to that narrative is more likely to be persuaded. The third causal strategy is congruence and incongruence. Narratives are crafted to agree with one’s reality to the extent that it is in line, or congruent, with their belief system or ideologies. Individuals are highly protective of their values; therefore it is difficult for one to be persuaded by a story that is incongruent with their ideologies. The hypothesis rests on the idea that as one’s perception of congruence increases, the more likely an individual is to be persuaded by the narrative.

The last causal strategy outlined by Jones and McBeth is narrator trust and credibility. The storyteller's trustworthiness, accuracy, objectivity, expert status and overall likeability influence the audience's willingness to accept their message. The hypothesis states that as trust in the narrator increases, the more likely an individual is to be persuaded by the narrative. The other portion of NPF rests on analyzing narratives at the meso level. Meso level narrative analysis is interested in explaining how policy narratives influence policy solutions and outcomes. There are three hypotheses that go along with meso level narrative analysis. The first is that individuals or groups who are portraying themselves as losing on an issue will use narrative to expand the policy issue in order to increase their supporters. The second is the individuals or groups who are portraying themselves as winning on an issue will use narrative to maintain the status quo. Lastly, the third hypothesis states that groups will use narrative to later and manipulate the composition of coalitions for their own benefit. Shanahan, Jones, and McBeth (2011) furthered NPF by intersecting it with Paul Sabatier and Hank Jensen-Smith's (1993) Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF), and seeking to further ACF's explanation of the policy process and outcomes.

Conclusion

The various dimensions of political language provide an explanation as to how problems move in and out of public attention, however there are some limitations to the field. For instance, the study of political language is open to interpretation. The researcher is only able to report the ways in which a statement was said and cannot pinpoint or know exactly how something was perceived by others. There are also other dimensions that play

into the attention a particular issue receives including interest group input, political party activity, legislative priorities, and the dynamics of the current political climate.

The study of political language allows one to dissect and categorize discourse using the theoretical frameworks presented in the preceding paragraphs. Studying immigration through a political language perspective outlines the contours of the debate and offers insight as to how and why information is presented to the public in a certain manner. Also, the political language perspective is useful when there is no hard data to support why some issues are perceived as problems and others are not. In regards to immigration, it is difficult to accurately count the number of undocumented individuals in the country at a given point and time. Therefore, ideology and emotion are often at the center of the debate over immigration policy in America, not hard data. Language analysis illuminates this important element of the development of immigration policy in the U.S.

Works Cited

Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Edelman, Murray. *Symbolic Uses of Politics*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964

Entman, Robert M. "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm." *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4 (1993): 51-58.

Fischer, Frank. *Reframing Public Policy: Discursive Politics and Deliberative Practices*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Goffman, Erving. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986.

Hirschmann, Albert. *Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy*. Boston: Belknap Press, 1991.

Iyengar, Shanto. "Framing Responsibility for Political Issues." *Political Behavior* 12, no. 1 (1990): 59-70.

Jones, Michael D., and Mark K. McBeth. "A Narrative Policy Framework: Clear Enough to Be Wrong?" *Policy Studies Journal* 28, no. 2 (2010): 329-353

Kingdon, John W. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. London: Longman, 2006.

Lakoff, George. *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Lau, Richard R., and Mark Schlesinger. "Policy Frames, Metaphorical Reasoning, and Support for Public Policies." *Political Psychology* 26, no. 1 (2005): 77-114.

Patterson, Molly, and Kristen Monroe. "Narrative in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* (1998): 315-331.

Rocheftort, David, and Roger Cobb. *Politics of Problem Definition: Shaping the Policy Agenda*.
Wichita: University of Kansas Press, 1994.

Schattschneider, Elmer E. *Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*.
New York: Wadsworth, 1974.

Shanahan, Elizabeth A., Michael D. Jones, and Mark K. McBeth. "Policy Narratives and Policy
Processes." *Policy Studies Journal* 39, no. 3 (2011): 535-561

Stone, Deborah. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. 3rd ed. New York:
W.W. Norton & Company, 2002.

Chapter 3

PRESIDENTIAL RHETORIC & IMMIGRATION POLICY

As the previous literature review illustrates, language holds a great deal of value in the political arena. To review briefly, the study of political language is used to explain how issues and problems move from issues of private concern to issues that require national attention and potential legislative action. How an issue gains importance is best explained through the study of agenda-setting. The agenda-setting perspective illustrates how and why issues emerge into spotlight and then fade out of the public's attention (Kingdon, 1980 and Baumgartner and Jones, 1991). Numerous rhetorical strategies help explain how certain issues end up as matters of importance for quite some time and then disappear from the public's attention. In order for an issue to gain agenda status it must, first, be defined as a problem. The ability of problem definers to address an issue as a problem or a matter of unimportance has a great impact on whether or not the issue becomes worthy of agenda status (Schattschneider 1960, Rochefort and Cobb 1994, Edelman 1964, Stone 2002, Hirschman 1991). Framing is another rhetorical strategy utilized to help the public make sense of complex issues.

Framing often refers to the effects of judgment and choice, and allows the public to utilize their own worldviews when simplifying a complex issue (Iyengar 1996, Lakoff 2002). Framing is similar to problem definition in the sense that it ultimately helps to define a problem's causality and generate different solutions and alternatives (Entman 1993, Goffman 1974, Lakoff 2002). Lastly, the concept of narrative combines storytelling

and facts to make sense of an issue and propose remedies (Patterson and Monroe 1996, 1998, Stone 2002, Fischer 2003, Jones and McBeth 2010). Narrative, problem definition, and framing are important dimensions of political language whose identification helps us understand why issues of private concern move to problems considered worthy of legislative action.

The Importance of Metaphors

Aside from problem definition strategies, another important aspect of political language is metaphor. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) argue that metaphors do more than just make our thoughts more vivid and interesting; they actually help to shape our perceptions and understanding. Metaphors are typically thought of as a function of language alone, not a function of thought or action. Lakoff and Johnson argue that metaphors are, in fact, pervasive in everyday life, not just in language or in thought. Essentially, our ordinary conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. The systematic nature of metaphors allows us to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another. Metaphorical concepts that are systematic are referred to as structural metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson point out that the most common conceptual metaphor is the idea that arguments are war. For instance, the argument as war metaphor is conceptualized by statements such as, “your claims are indefensible,” or “they attacked every weak point in my argument.” These statements illustrate arguments as wars or battles that have a clear winner and loser. The final group of metaphors identified by Lakoff and Johnson are orientational metaphors. These metaphors have a basis in our cultural and physical experience. Orientational metaphors organize a whole system of

concepts in terms of another, and generally refer to space. Common orientational metaphors include high status is up, low status is down. Statements such as “she’ll rise to the top” and “he is at the bottom of the social hierarchy” illustrate that the concept of status is correlated with power, and those with power are said to be on top. Metaphors provide context to everyday situations, and work to shape perceptions and understandings around various concepts.

Metaphors are especially pervasive in the political realm. Mark Schlesinger and Richard Lau (2000) postulate that both the public and political elites comprehend complex policies, in part, by reasoning through policy metaphor. Reasoning by policy metaphors involves making comparisons between proposed policy alternatives and more readily understood social institutions. These comparisons reduce the cognitive burden often associated with trying to reason through complex policy problems and reveal potential alternatives that might not have otherwise been revealed to the policy maker. Metaphorical reasoning involves five different cognitive processes, including identifying causal responsibility, assigning treatment responsibility, applying norms of fairness, evoking affective responses, and establishing concrete comparisons. Schlesinger and Lau also postulate that metaphorical reasoning involves several distinct stages. The first includes understanding the metaphor at hand. The next steps involve deciding whether the metaphor is an appropriate guide to policy and determining whether it is compatible with other favored institutional templates. While metaphorical reasoning has its limits, more explicit reliance on metaphorical alignment has the potential to improve deliberation in the political arena (Schlesinger and Lau 2005). Schlesinger and Lau utilize health policy examples to illustrate their argument. A common policy metaphor utilized in the debate

over health care policy is the idea that access to quality health care is a right. By defining something as a right, there is a connotation that the issue at hand is important and necessary to the everyday lives of citizens, and therefore, it is important to deliver a solution that awards this proposed right to individuals.

Metaphors can work to allow the public and political actors to comprehend complex policy problems in terms of other, more familiar concepts. As policy problems within the political arena become more complex, language and rhetoric play an important role in helping citizens and leaders in all levels of government look at all possible policy alternatives and work towards solving the issue at hand.

The Importance of Presidential Rhetoric

The rhetorical role of the president is becoming increasingly important to the political arena. The president's ability to take center stage and speak on issues allows him to wield tremendous influence over the direction of public policy during his term in office. Sam Kernell (1997) points out that the American president has come to rely on "going public" or making direct appeals to voters in order to encourage Congress to take legislative action on a certain issue or problem. The president relies on this strategy because the divided nature of government makes bargaining a less appealing and successful strategy, forcing presidents to turn to public appeals. When a president "goes public," they seek to mobilize support from other politicians on their behalf. Typically, the president will target a particular audience or constituency with their message. Today the president has the ability to do press conferences and special appearances on a particular issue that can be watched by a large audience through television and the Internet. Aside

from the power of “going public,” the president has numerous other rhetorical devices that can be utilized to express opinions, influence legislative action, and orient the public towards a particular issue or problem, including inaugural addresses, signing statements and “war rhetoric” (Campbell and Jamieson 2008).

The power of presidential rhetoric to orient the public towards a particular issue is extremely powerful, as Andrew Whitford and Jeff Yates (2009) point out. Whitford and Yates utilize the social construction theory to explain how certain characterizations of populations that will be affected by a particular course of policy action. A social construct is said to be anything that exists as a product of human social interaction, instead of by virtue of objective, human-independent existence. Examples of social constructs are governments, money, language, race, gender, nationality, and so on. These constructs have normative and evaluative connotations, and cast the related populations in either a positive or deserving light, or a negative or an undeserving light. Other authors, such as Vanessa Beasley and Mary Stuckey further address the characterizations often made by the president.

Beasley (2006) explores the issue of national identity in presidential rhetoric from three main areas: immigrants, race, and gender. She examined the ways in which presidential rhetoric included and excluded these groups in the definition of the American people. For all three, she finds that presidents are somewhat contradictory in how they talk about the collectivity. On the one hand, presidents tend to emphasize the common values shared by all Americans as one strategy to include everyone under the umbrella of “Americanism.” On the other hand, she finds that frequent references to civil religious themes suggest that only certain citizens qualify for membership in the group.

Mary Stuckey also tackles the issues of inclusivity and exclusivity in presidential rhetoric, in *Defining Americans* (2004). Stuckey's focal point is how exclusive presidential discourse has changed over time. Stuckey focused on her analysis on presidential speeches and pointed out that the president will often utilize invisible and visible metaphors to focus attention on typically excluded groups within American society. Beasley and Stuckey illustrate the important fact that the president is instrumental in not only taking policy positions, but further characterizing and defining the country's identity.

The Emerging Role of the President in Immigration Reform

Conversations about immigration reform started to reemerge following the September 11th terrorist attacks in 2001. The attacks prompted a large realignment of the American immigration system from the introduction of the Department of Homeland Security, a newly created governmental agency that focused exclusively on security and the introduction of new security measures at the borders and in the air. President George W. Bush quickly became an important figure in the immigration debate and in 2004 began a campaign to reform America's immigration system. In all of his State of the Unions in the years following and in many other speeches directed towards immigration policy, President Bush lobbied for comprehensive immigration reform. Throughout his terms in office, President Bush spoke about immigration through the frame of national security, but still advocating for a temporary guest worker program from immigrants. For example, in his 2004 State of the Union Address, Bush(2004) stated:

Tonight I also ask you to reform our immigration laws so they reflect our values and benefit our economy. I propose a new temporary-worker program to match willing foreign workers with willing employers when no Americans can be found to fill the

job. This reform will be good for our economy because employers will find needed workers in an honest and orderly system. A temporary-worker program will help protect our homeland, allowing Border Patrol and law enforcement to focus on true threats to our national security. I oppose amnesty, because it would encourage further illegal immigration and unfairly reward those who break our laws. My temporary-worker program will preserve the citizenship path for those who respect the law while bringing millions of hard-working men and women out from the shadows of American life.

This quote exemplifies President Bush's stance on immigration reform, and his coupling of the issue with the theme of national security. His repeated references to security illustrate the importance of that concept in the time following the September 11th attacks. Despite President Bush's very public stance and pleas for comprehensive immigration reform, such reform was never seen during his tenure in office. His stances on comprehensive immigration at the time were drastically different than the position of most of the Republican Party, which certainly contributed to the fact that immigration reform was never passed during his presidency.

Conversations about immigration reform have carried over into the presidency of Barack Obama. The Obama administration has argued that in order to effectively rebuild the economy, it is important to restore faith in America's "broken immigration system." President Obama has also implemented more immigration enforcement policies than President Bush. For instance, the most well known Obama enforcement policy is 287(g) or the Law Enforcement Partnership program. 287(g) awards access to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement database to state and local law enforcement to give them the opportunity to check the immigration status of individuals who are in police custody. If an individual is found unauthorized to be in the country then they are handed over to federal authorities to go through the deportation process. Also, unlike President Bush, Obama has

had to deal with states trying to implement their own immigration policies while waiting for national comprehensive immigration reform to come from Washington. States, most notably Arizona, grew to be fed up with how slow immigration was being dealt with at the national level and implemented their own immigration enforcement policy, which other states began to model (Pearce, Arizona Republic 2010).

These state policies have led to greater discussion about who has control over immigration policy, the federal government or the states. As a result of this debate, President Obama has repeatedly urged Congress to pass a comprehensive immigration reform, but as of early 2013 action has yet to be taken. Many proposals have been placed on the table to facilitate pathways to citizenship for undocumented individuals, such as the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. The proposed DREAM Act would provide permanent residency to individuals who arrived in the country as minors if they complete two years of active military service, or two or four years at a higher education institution. In June 2012, President Obama issued an executive order loosely based off of the DREAM Act called Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). DACA halts the deportation process for minors who arrived in the United States before age fifteen and allows them the opportunity apply for employment authorization. DACA is not a pathway to citizenship, but it helps to make the naturalization process easier for many undocumented immigrants.

Both President Obama and President Bush have utilized various rhetorical and political strategies to make their positions known to the public and Congress. The focus of this analysis is their use of policy metaphors. The goal here is to illuminate this important

dimension of political language in an effort to better understand the dynamics of contemporary immigration reform efforts.

Methods

This project examines all of President Obama's and President Bush's State of the Union addresses, Sunday morning talk show appearances, and other speeches related to immigration from 2001 to present. These speeches were found using the *Public Papers of the President* database operated by the University of California in Santa Barbara. All State of the Union and inaugural addresses were examined, because these are important speeches in the president's tenure. The State of the Union is important because it sets his legislative agenda (Edwards 2012). While Sunday morning talk shows do not get a wide viewership, they provide a way for legislators to remain in tune with the political climate at that moment. Mentions about immigration reform became prevalent in President Bush's 2004 State of the Union addresses and has been mentioned in all of President Obama's State of the Union addresses. "Immigration speeches" and press conference related to immigration, which I defined to be those addresses that have a primary focus or orientation to immigration policy and reform, were also examined as part of this analysis. These other speeches were found by searching for the keyword *immigration reform* using the same database. The initial search yielded over three hundred results, but after excluding fact sheets, press releases, and the original text of executive orders issued by either president, the results were then narrowed to 65. The speeches were then examined looking for instances of metaphorical reasoning used to put the issue of immigration into context.

Data Collection

References to immigration reform did not start to enter into President Bush's State of the Union addresses until 2004. However, discussion about immigration reform entered into the political arena in 2001 following the terrorist attacks of September 11th. The discourse centered on the following: issues surrounding national identity, "boots on the ground" metaphors and "living in the shadows" metaphors.

The concept of immigration is often closely tied to America's national identity and values. The majority of metaphors related to immigration illustrate how America was built with the hard work and dedication of individuals who immigrated to the country. The frequent use of national identity metaphors suggests that there was a deliberate attempt to align the issue of immigration reform with this long-revered lore of the American immigrant.

President Bush repeatedly utilized the "melting pot" metaphor in his addresses during his terms in office. The idea of a melting pot is well-known to many because it is often reinforced that America is a nation of immigrants and therefore it is important to pass comprehensive reform to eradicate unauthorized immigration. The use of metaphors, like "melting pot," illustrated the importance of immigrants to the American economic and democratic systems. Also, these metaphors help to contextualize the need for immigration reform. For instance, Bush's repeated reference the successes of immigrants in America because of their dedication to the "American Dream," shows how valuable and important these individuals are to society. Bush made the argument for temporary guest worker programs, because he did not believe in "amnesty," instead he argued that a guest worker

program would continue to allow immigrants to flourish in America just as they have in the past. President Bush stated in this 2005 radio address:

Our nation has been strengthened by generations of immigrants who came to America through patience, hard work, and assimilation. In this new century, we must continue to welcome legal immigrants and help them learn customs and values that unite all Americans... In the coming months, I look forward to working with Congress on comprehensive immigration reform that will enforce our laws, secure our border, and uphold our deepest values.

Bush points out that many immigrants have come to America with the same dedication to the “American Dream” that naturalized citizens have. While national identity metaphors are being used, the focus on the “American Dream” also makes immigrant populations seem more proximal. By adding proximity to these populations, the audience is able to better relate to these American immigrant populations, as opposed to feeling removed from them. As noted previously, the closer proximity one feels towards an issue or a group at the center of an issue, the greater the support to find a solution to the problem at hand. Bush made several other references to national identity in his 2004 press conference with Mexican president Vincete Fox, his 2005 remarks to the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and his 2004 remarks at Mesa Community College in Phoenix, Arizona.

Unlike President Bush, national identity metaphors have not been frequently found in the addresses related to immigration reform delivered by President Obama. Obama’s use of these metaphors illustrates the importance of building cohesion within the nation. In his most recent State of the Union address, President Obama made repeated references the rebuilding of the America within the context of immigration reform.

The opponents of action are out of excuses. We should be working on comprehensive immigration reform right now. But if election-year politics keeps Congress from acting on a comprehensive plan, let's at least agree to stop expelling

responsible young people who want to staff our labs, start new businesses, and defend this country. Send me a law that gives them the chance to earn their citizenship. I will sign it right away.

In this excerpt, President Obama points to examples of the jobs that immigrants hold in America in order to further illustrate the role they play in establishing the country's national identity. Obama alludes to the history of the United States as melting pot, full of individuals from other nationalities that help to contribute to the identity and success of the U.S. Also, by pointing to the examples of the kinds of jobs that these individuals can hold, it further points to the need of a comprehensive immigration reform policy. President Obama made references to national identity in his 2009 State of the Union Address, his 2009 remarks at the National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast, and a 2009 press conference with Mexican president Felipe de Jesus Calderon.

National identity metaphors help to illustrate the need for immigration reform by characterizing America's immigrant populations as beneficial to the political system and economy. These metaphors also work to further frame and define the current issues surrounding immigration and work to help the issue gain more saliency in the political arena.

As noted previously, since 2001 immigration has been closely tied to the issues of national security due to the fact that the September 11th hijackers entered the United States through legally issued visas. This fact alarmed many politicians and citizens, and thus, caused the restructuring of agencies charged with overseeing and enforcing current immigration policies. The "boots on the ground metaphor" is used to illustrate the work that is being done on the border in order to promote national security.

President Bush made reference to the issue of security in all of his State of the Union addresses since 2004. These metaphors showed the relationship between security and immigration reform. Putting immigration in the context of security helps to further define the issue as a problem, shows the severity and causality of the problem, and helps to generate certain policy alternatives. As time went on, President Bush focused less and less on security in the majority of his addresses on immigration reform, and instead focused on the importance of immigration to the American economy in order to show the necessity of immigration reform and his proposed temporary guest worker program. In his 2009 remarks on border security in Tucson, Arizona, President Bush stated:

The third part of our plan to strengthen border enforcement is to stop people from crossing the border illegally in the first place. And we're increasing manpower; we're increasing technology and infrastructure across this border. We're integrating these resources in ways we have never done before. Since 2001, we've hired 1,900 new Border Patrol agents. I just signed a bill last month that will enable us to add another 1,000 Border Patrol agents. When we complete these hires, we will have enlarged the Border Patrol by about 3,000 agents, from 9,500 the year I took office to 12,500 next year. This is an increase of more than 30 percent, and most of the new agents will be assigned right here in the State of Arizona. And to help the agents, we're deploying technologies. Listen, technology can help an individual agent have broader reach and more effectiveness. When agents can take advantage of cutting-edge equipment like overhead surveillance drones and infrared cameras, they can do a better job for all of us.

This quote, while it does not explicitly mention boots on the ground, points to the increased number of agents that have been placed on the border since 2001. This measurement helps to illuminate what the government is doing to ensure that borders are secure and act on the problem at hand. Bush makes references to the increases in security in his 2006 remarks on immigration legislation passed by Congress, a 2008 interview with Brit Hume

of FOX News, his 2007 remarks following a discussion of Employment Verification Systems, and a 2009 interview with Juan Carlos Lopez of CNN En Espanol.

President Obama's State of the Union references to immigration mainly focused on security. Like Bush, Obama utilized "boots on the ground," expelling chaos, and orderly border metaphors to further put the issue of immigration into context. President Obama's references to security and his administration's efforts to beef up personnel and technology on the border help to show the work that has been done on the issue of immigration and further presents the problem as a matter of national security. In his 2010 remarks on immigration reform in El Paso, Texas:

They wanted more agents on the border. Well, we now have more boots on the ground on the southwest border than at any time in our history. The Border Patrol has 20,000 agents -- more than twice as many as there were in 2004, a buildup that began under President Bush and that we have continued.

This measurement of border patrol further shows the extent of what the government has done in terms of bettering security on the border. President Obama made references to "boots on the ground" and what is being done in terms of immigration enforcement at the national level. President Obama makes references to "boots on the ground" and increases in the number of border enforcement in all of his thirty five addresses made on immigration reform since his inauguration in 2009.

The "boots of the ground" metaphor illustrates what has been done in terms of immigration reform from the frame of national security. Immigration reform gained saliency as the result of a major security crisis in America and as a result this metaphor is

most often used to show the need of immigration reform to prevent another terrorist attack.

The “living in the shadows” metaphor shows the fact that many immigrant populations in America are often marginalized because of the lack of comprehensive reform policies and the enforcement-only policies that are often employed by the national government. This metaphor characterizes those who are most affected by current immigration policy as victims and begs the need for policies to bring these people “into the light.”

President Bush repeatedly referred to immigrants “living in the shadows.” Consider the following:

Together with Congress we are going to create a temporary worker program that is going to take pressure off the borders, bring workers *out of the shadows*... People in this debate must recognize that we will not be able to effectively enforce our immigration laws until we create a temporary worker program. (Italics added for emphasis)

This use of the “living in the shadows” metaphor by President Bush suggests that by creating policies that work to benefit immigrant populations they will have a better chance of entering the mainstream economic system. Bush made more mentions of immigrants “living in the shadows” in a 2006 news conference, his 2006 remarks at Hispanic National Prayer breakfast, his 2007 remarks in Yuma, and many other remarks in the latter half of his second term in office from 2007-2009.

Analysis

As mentioned earlier, the goal of this project was to gain further insight on the policy process through a political language focus. The most important finding of

this research is the differences between the language and metaphors used by President Bush and President Obama regarding immigration reform. Through his use of metaphors, President Bush created a colorful, in depth narrative about the immigrant experience in America. Bush argued for a temporary guest worker programs that would help move immigrants out of the secondary job sector and into mainstream economy through the use of multiple metaphors and concepts. Bush's metaphorical language exemplifies E.E. Schattschneider's work on scope. By widening the number of individuals who might feel a connection with the immigration experience, and the need for immigration reform, he sought to expand the scope of conflict and shift the balance of power in his direction.

President Obama's metaphorical language around immigration reform has remained static throughout his terms in office. In the early years into his first term, Obama focused on other issues, such as healthcare and the economy. Therefore, his rhetoric has mostly been reactionary in order to keep immigration out of the major spotlight. If President Obama keeps the language about immigration reform static, the issue will probably not move to a high legislative priority. Despite the lack of creative references and proposed calls to action during his first term, there has been movement in the area of immigration reform since President Obama's inauguration. The differences in the language used by President Bush and President Obama show the differences in the priorities of the two administrations. How both presidents have defined the issue and need for immigration reform gives great insight into the work that has been done so far, and what will be done in regards to the issue at hand in the future.

Works Cited

Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Beasley, Vanessa. *You, The People: American National Identity in Presidential Rhetoric*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004.

Bush, George W. "State of the Union." 2001. In *Public Papers of the President*.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29643>

Bush George W. "State of the Union." 2002. In *Public Papers of the President*.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29644>

Bush, George W. "State of the Union." 2003. In *Public Papers of the President*.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29645>

Bush, George W. "State of the Union." 2004. In *Public Papers of the President*.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29646>

Bush, George W. "Remarks at Mesa Community College." 2004. In *Public Papers of the President*. <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-2004-book1/pdf/PPP-2004-book1-doc-pg96.pdf>

Bush, George W. "Press Conference with Vicente Fox." 2005. In *Public Papers of the President*.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=63028&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Bush, George W. "Radio Address." 2005. In *Public Papers of the President*.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=62280&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Bush, George W. "Remarks to the Hispanic Chamber of Congress." 2005. In *Public Papers of the President*.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=64582&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Bush, George W. "State of the Union." 2005. In *Public Papers of the President*.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=58746>

Bush, George W. "State of the Union." 2006. In *Public Papers of the President*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65090>

Bush, George W. "Remarks on Immigration Legislation Passed." 2006. In *Public Papers of the President*
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=68475&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Bush, George W. "News Conference." 2006. In *Public Papers of the President*
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=72491&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Bush, George W. "Remarks at the National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast." 2006. In *Public Papers of the President*
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=113&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Bush, George W. "State of the Union." 2007. In *Public Papers of the President*
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=24446>

Bush, George W. "Remarks in Yuma." 2007. In *Public Papers of the President*
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25563&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Bush, George W. "Remarks on Employment Verification." 2007. In *Public Papers of the President*
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=75095&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Bush, George W. "State of the Union." 2008. In *Public Papers of the President*
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=24446>

Bush, George W. "Interview with Brit Hume of FOX News." 2008. In *Public Papers of the President*
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=85437&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Campbell, Kathleen Kohrs, and Kathleen Hall Jamieson. *Presidents Creating the Presidency: Deeds Done in Words*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2008

Edelman, Murray. *Symbolic Uses of Politics*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964

Edwards, Jason A. and Richard Herder. Melding a New Immigration Narrative? President George W. Bush and the Immigration Debate. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 23, no. 1. (2012)40-65.

Entman, Robert M. "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm." *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4 (1993): 51-58.

Fischer, Frank. *Reframing Public Policy: Discursive Politics and Deliberative Practices*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Goffman, Erving. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986.

Hirschmann, Albert. *Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy*. Boston: Belknap Press, 1991.

Iyengar, Shanto. "Framing Responsibility for Political Issues." *Political Behavior* 12, no. 1 (1990): 59-70.

Jones, Michael D., and Mark K. McBeth. "A Narrative Policy Framework: Clear Enough to Be Wrong?" *Policy Studies Journal* 28, no. 2 (2010): 329-353

Kernell, Samuel. *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*. N.p.: CQ Press, 2006.

Kingdon, John W. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. London: Longman, 2006.

Lakoff, George. *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Lau, Richard R., and Mark Schlesinger. "The Measure and Meaning of Policy Metaphors." *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 3 (2000): 611-626. 7

Lau, Richard R., and Mark Schlesinger. "Policy Frames, Metaphorical Reasoning, and Support for Public Policies." *Political Psychology* 26, no. 1 (2005): 77-114.

Obama, Barack. "State of the Union." 2009. In *Public Papers of the President* <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=85753>

Obama, Barack. "Interview with Juan Carlos Lopez of CNN En Espanol." 2009. In *Public Papers of the President* <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=86020&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Obama, Barack. "National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast." 2009. In *Public Papers of the President*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=86311&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Obama, Barack. "Remarks on Border Security Legislation." 2009. In *Public Papers of the President*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=88284&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Obama, Barack. "Press Conference with Felipe Calderon." 2009. In *Public Papers of the President*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=86014&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Obama, Barack. "State of the Union." 2010. In *Public Papers of the President*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=87433>

Obama, Barack. "State of the Union." 2011. In *Public Papers of the President*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=88928>

Obama, Barack. "Remarks in El Paso, Texas." 2011. In *Public Papers of the President*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=90373&st=immigration+reform&st1>

Obama, Barack. "State of the Union." 2012. In *Public Papers of the President*

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=99000>

Patterson, Molly, and Kristen Monroe. "Narrative in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* (1998): 315-331.

Rochefort, David, and Roger Cobb. *Politics of Problem Definition: Shaping the Policy Agenda*.

Wichita: University of Kansas Press, 1994.

Schattschneider, Elmer E. *Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*.

New York: Wadsworth, 1974.

Stuckey, Mary E., *Defining Americans: The Presidency and National Identity*. Lawrence:

University Press of Kansas, 2004.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. "Fact Sheet: Delegation of Immigration Authority Section 287(g) Immigration and Nationality Act." 2011.

<http://www.ice.gov/news/library/factsheets/287g.htm>.

Whitford, Andrew B. and Jeff Yates. *Presidential Rhetoric and the Public Agenda: Constructing the War on Drugs*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2009.

Chapter 4

Rhetoric of Immigration in Arizona

Introduction

In January 2010, state senator and former speaker of the Arizona state house, Russell Pearce introduced the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act of 2010, or what is better known as SB 1070. SB 1070 was designed to quell the growing border issues that Arizona was facing at that time. The proposed law was the broadest immigration reform policy to go through state legislature and, though the law had several controversial provisions, the most controversial was the requirement of law enforcement to check the immigration status of anyone they suspected of being in the country illegally.

After months of heated debate, SB 1070 was signed into law by Governor Jan Brewer in April of that same year. Soon after the law's initial passage, the rest of the country and the federal government began to react. By the beginning of 2011, several other states, such as Alabama and Utah, passed their own sweeping state immigration reform policies that mimicked almost all of the provisions in Arizona's SB 1070. This attempt made by states to regulate immigration policy sparked a heated national debate over where the jurisdiction over immigration policy lies in America, and whether law enforcement should be empowered to check the citizen status of those who are suspected of being undocumented. In response to the latter, the federal government issued a lawsuit against Arizona and SB 1070, and in April 2011 the ninth federal district court placed an injunction on SB 1070.

By December, the Supreme Court agreed to hear arguments for the case, ushering in a period of significant tension between the leadership in Arizona and the Obama Administration. The Supreme Court finally heard oral arguments from both sides in April 2012 and made their final decision in June. Ultimately, the Supreme Court struck down other provisions of SB 1070, but allowed for the language in the law about immigration status checks to remain intact. Though the Supreme Court made their decision about the fate of the law, there is still much debate over immigration reform at all levels of government.

In the ongoing national debate over immigration reform, Arizona is widely seen as the “ground zero” because of the passage and controversy surrounding S.B. 1070. This study outlines the contours of the debate within Arizona from January 2010 to June 2012, when the debate over S.B. 1070 was at its peak. The purpose of this study is to highlight the complex dimensions immigration reform rhetoric, and provide greater insight into the overall discourse surrounding S.B. 1070. This research effort includes an in-depth content analysis of the state’s primary newspaper outlets to determine, among other things, the tenor of the debate as it emerged and unfolded in Arizona.

Methods

The media plays a key role in disseminating political language and messages to the public. Today, there are many sources of information for individuals however newspapers and their online archives still play a key role in the dissemination of important information and news. As the only two daily issued newspapers in the state, the *Arizona Republic* and *the Arizona Daily Star* play a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions over policy

questions. . . Founded in 1890, the *Arizona Republic* is published in Phoenix and is circulated statewide (Arizona Republic “About Us” 2012). The paper itself has a typically conservative leaning and has supported Republican candidates for president since 2000. The *Arizona Daily Star* is the major morning daily newspaper that serves Tucson and surrounding districts of southern Arizona. Unlike the *Republic*, the *Daily Star* has a more liberal leaning in regards to news coverage and has endorsed exclusively Democratic candidates since 2000 (Daily Star “About Us” 2012).

Throughout the entirety over the debate over Arizona’s state immigration policy, S.B. 1070, both newspapers were crucial in delivering the latest news and opinions on the issue. In order to capture the shift in coverage and attitudes regarding immigration policy in Arizona, a frame analysis of every article and opinion piece published on S.B. 1070 in both of these newspapers was conducted. From January 2010, when S.B. 1070 was first introduced in the state legislature, to the Supreme Court decision over the fate of the bill, several articles and editorials have been published regarding the subject since 2010. The goal of this frame analysis was to track the changes in opinion over the course of the debate and after-effects of the passage of SB 1070.

In order to do so, a database search of both newspapers using both LexisNexus and the respective online archives of each newspaper was conducted. A total of 135 articles and editorials came up from a search of the term “SB 1070,” and were coded according to a positive, negative or neutral “tone.” Articles with a positive tone were those that presented information that would largely support S.B. 1070 or state immigration enforcement policies. Articles with a negative tone were those that presented information that would help make the case against S.B. 1070. For example, an article that presented information

about the financial repercussions of SB 1070, such as “Will SB 1070 Hurt Arizona’s Economy?” published on July 11, 2010 in the *Arizona Republic*, was coded as negative based on the text of the piece and overall opinion or tone of the author’s writing. Neutral articles did not come out strongly in favor of one position or the other, and were comprised of both positive and negative tones, or were just timeline articles that gave general information about the state of S.B. 1070 within Arizona.

Going beyond the tone of coverage, the articles were divided into different categories based on how the immigration issue was framed. Articles were divided into five framing categories: security, federalism, race/ethnicity, civil rights, and economic. Articles that fell in the security frame focused on the national and state security issues associated with immigration. Articles within the federalism frame focused on the question of who has jurisdiction over immigration reform in America, the states or the federal government. Next, articles that fell into the race/ethnicity frame focused on the racial issues that are associated with S.B. 1070. Articles within the civil rights frame focused on language that related S.B. 1070 to the Constitutional or moral dimensions of liberty. Finally, articles within the economic frame focused on the financial costs and burdens to states, the federal government, or individuals within the realm of immigration reform. Some articles from within the sample fell into one or more of the framing categories, and therefore, the numbers of articles associated with a particular frame exceed the number of articles in the sample.

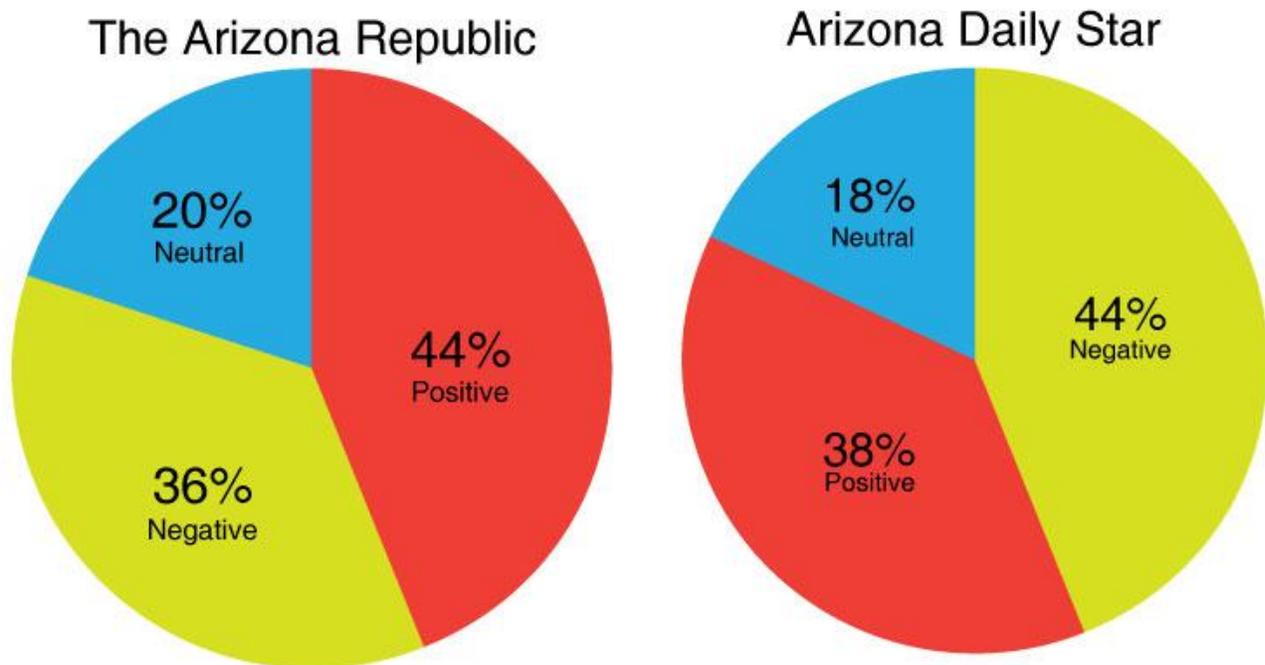
Editorials were also focused on to add a greater depth of analysis to how each side of the debate portrayed the issue. Editorials on the positive or pro-S.B. 1070, side were analyzed utilizing the problem definition framework (Rochefort and Cobb, 1993). Articles

on the negative or anti-S.B. 1070 side were analyzed using the “reactionary rhetoric” thesis (Hirschmann, 1991). Lastly, storytelling was examined to showcase the unique qualities of political language and how narrative to provide greater insight, depth, and explanation to an issue.

Data Collection

Overview of the Tenor of News Coverage

Data collected from the analysis of “tone” was charted and placed into graphs in order to show the type of given to S.B. 1070.



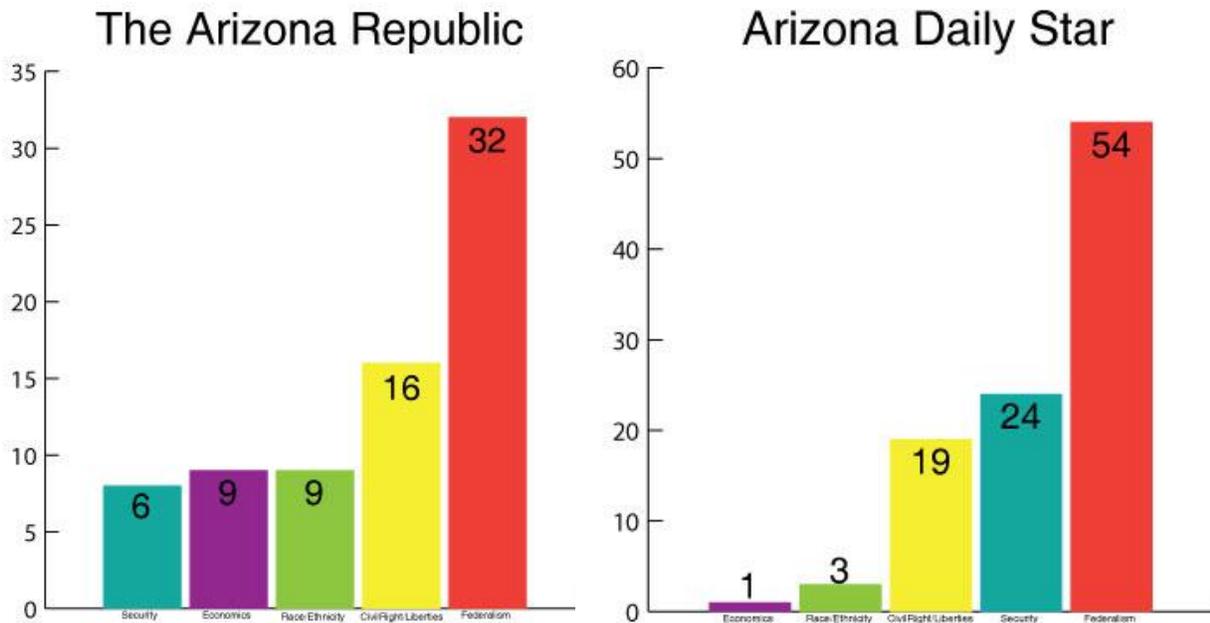
In total, fifty-nine articles and editorials were published in *The Arizona Republic*. Twenty-six of those articles had a positive or pro-SB 1070 tone. The majority of the

positively toned articles were news-based articles that focused on many of the arguments in favor of the law, however, ten editorials from well-known supporters of the law, including Governor Jan Brewer and former State Senator Russell Pearce. The *Republic* published twenty-one negative or anti-S.B. 1070 articles in that timeframe, and ten neutral pieces, which were timelines of the SB 1070 events from when it was first introduced in the Arizona state legislature to present. The *Arizona Daily Star* published a total of seventy-six articles and editorials focused around S.B. 1070. Thirty-four of those published pieces were negatively-toned articles, twenty-nine positively-toned articles, and fourteen neutral articles.

Based on this analysis it is interesting, although perhaps not surprising, that both newspapers largely presented their respective liberal and conservative positions. The majority of articles published in the *Arizona Republic* were positively toned, or in favor of S.B. 1070, whereas the majority of the articles in the more liberal, *Arizona Daily Star*, negatively toned or anti-S.B. 1070. This is true even for those columns that were presenting strictly news-based accounts, not explicitly opinion pieces. The percentage of coverage was close to the same, except for the negative and positive tones were reversed, which suggests that a relatively equal level of bias is present in both papers.

Framing S.B 1070

As noted previously, these news articles were also sorted according to four dominant frames: security, federalism, race/ethnicity, civil rights, and economic. The charts below display the total number of frames observed in each paper by category:



The red bars represent the federalism frame, blue represents security, yellow represents civil rights/liberties, purple represents the economics frame, and green represents race/ethnicity. Federalism was the number one frame utilized in both papers. This is not surprising because federalism and the question over who has jurisdiction over immigration lawmaking was a central point of disagreement in the S.B. 1070 debate at both the state and national levels. The rest of the frames varied between newspapers, which may in part have something to do with differing regional priorities within the state.

The *Arizona Daily Star* serves the entire state, but mostly Tucson and southern Arizona. Perhaps because the newspaper is stationed in an area of the state that is close to the Mexican border, security is the second most prevalent frame. These results show how geography and physical proximity to an issue matter, even within the borders of states. This analysis also helps to shed light on the regional concerns surrounding immigration

within the state. It is surprising that security was secondary to the federalism frame in the *Daily Star*, given the more liberal make-up of the Tucson area. One might have anticipated the opposite regarding these results. Geographical proximity may play a role because of how close southern Arizona is to Mexico. The *Arizona Republic* serves the entire state, but mostly central and northern Arizona. Security is still an important factor, but other issues come to the forefront. For instance, Phoenix is historically a more conservative area than the rest of Arizona, so civil liberties, rights, and freedoms are typically at the center of the debate in that area of the state. Even though there are many dimensions to the debate over S.B. 1070 within Arizona, federalism and right of jurisdiction are clearly central.

Editorial Analysis: The Arizona Republic

Editorial pieces help to provide insight into the various rhetorical strategies used when defining problems and framing various social issues. Usually written by individuals at the epicenter of a social problem, someone who has great stake in a particular policy outcome, or an expert on either side of the issue, editorials are another platform for disseminating one's message about a particular topic or issue. The *Arizona Republic* has been a go-to platform for various state politicians and political pundits to share their views on particular issues affecting the state. From April 2010 to July 2012, the *Republic* published a total of nineteen editorial pieces, fifteen of which were from supporters of the controversial law and three of which were from opponents. The following represents and analysis of select editorials utilizing several dimensions of problem definition outlined by David Rochefort and Roger Cobb (1993).

Former Arizona speaker of the house, Russell Pearce, wrote several editorials for the *Republic*, during the initial debate over the passage of the law and after he was ousted in a 2011 recall election. Pearce employed several major problem definition strategies in his portrayal of the immigration issue. For instance, Pearce stated in his last editorial for the *Republic* “Fight Versus Illegal Immigration Goes On:”

One state Senate race would not be national news were it not for the fact that for the last several years, I have led the successful battle against illegal immigration on the state, local and national level, most notably by authoring Arizona's SB 1070. It has made a difference here and nationally. The Phoenix Law Enforcement Association has stated, “Since SB 1070, Phoenix has experienced a 30-year-low crime rate.” Six-hundred police vacancies, budget cuts, and old policing strategies didn't bring about these falling crime rates. SB 1070 did.

Here, the language used by Pearce shows the use of *incidence* to make the case for S.B. 1070, and its positive implications for the state. As noted by Rochefort and Cobb, describing the prevalence, frequency, or infrequency of activities related to a social issue helps to define the issue as a problem, or not. Pearce’s use of incidence contributes to the overall argument in support of SB 1070, which is that its passage and subsequent implementation will help to quell crime and violence related to unauthorized immigration.

In this passage Pearce also utilized *novelty* language to describe the overall importance of S.B. 1070 in setting the stage for the current debate over who has control over direction and implementation of immigration policy. Pearce later pointed to the fact that thirty-four other states had passed legislation similar to S.B. 1070. This language helps to portray a “trailblazing” quality of S.B. 1070 and emphasizes Arizona’s unique position as a national leader in this area.

Popular *Arizona Republic* columnist, Ed Montini, also utilized several of Rochefort and Cobb's parameters of problem definition in his 2011 column, "The Business of SB 1070 is Business." In his editorial, Montini employs *causality* to define the issue of immigration in the state. Causality looks to the origins of a problem as a way to define its importance or lack of importance. Instead of focusing on the problems created by illegal immigration, Montini focuses on the law's impact to businesses. Montini states, "the fate of SB 1070 is not up to the Supreme Courts, that's because SB 1070's not about states' rights, social justice, or law enforcement; it's about business" (2011). Instead of focusing to the already defined causes of SB 1070, Montini defines the problem in different terms, which plays down both the severity the problem as it has been defined by Pearce and other state politicians.

Montini's editorial can also be examined through Albert Hirschmann's reactionary rhetoric thesis. Montini utilized *perversity* to show how the economic tenets of SB 1070 will act in the opposite manner as originally intended. According to Montini and other opponents of SB 1070, the law will adversely affect small businesses because of the lack of tourism in the state as a result of the act's passage and the negative provisions targeting migrant laborers who may work on ranches within the state. Futility thesis holds that attempts at social transformation will be unavailing. Montini argues in his editorial that S.B. 1070 will not be able to boost business as originally hoped for, but rather it will cause a downturn in Arizona businesses. Lastly, the jeopardy thesis argues that the cost of a proposed change endangers a change that has already been made. Opponents of S.B. 1070, including Montini, have argued that the tenets of the law may hurt the future for national immigration reforms that will pave a pathway to citizenship for individuals.

These two editorials reflect the major arguments on either side of the debate over SB 1070. These editorials utilize problem definition strategies and dimensions of the reactionary rhetoric thesis to frame and define the issues surrounding the immigration debate in Arizona.

Telling the Story of SB 1070

Aside from articles informing the public about the nuances of the debate within the state, numerous articles reflected the narrative of S.B. 1070, which helped to better explain the nuances of the policy debate. . Storytelling increases our conceptual knowledge about a given situation beyond just facts and figures by embedding how individuals are oriented in society (Stone 2002).

The slaying of fifty-eight year old Robert Krentz placed the debate over immigration policy within the state of Arizona into the national spotlight. In March 2010, Robert Krentz, a rancher from Cochise County, was murdered on his property by suspected drug smugglers who entered the United States illegally (Wagner 2010). Krentz's murder oriented the residents of Arizona toward the potential for stricter policies that would prevent further cases like this from happening. The fact that there were potentially violent criminals crossing the border and putting American citizens in harm's way reflected the severity of the law and the need for stricter enforcement policies. Aside from using severity to define the problem, there were also repeated references to Krentz's character which alluded to the fact that innocent Americans were being put at risk. Krentz was always defined as a "family man" with a "gentle character" when he was characterized in articles (2010). The murder of Robert Krentz was a direct cause of the introduction and

subsequent passage of S.B. 1070. The potential for danger and the lack of proper enforcement on the border was exacerbated by Krentz's murder and proved enough to Arizona lawmakers that the lives of residents living in southern Arizona were in danger.

Telling the narrative of AB 1070 shows the effects of the law on actual residents within Arizona. Storytelling allows individuals to see exactly how a certain situation may be affecting individuals rather than just hearing from lawmakers about the potential effects.

Concluding Insights

This frame analysis helped to shed light on the many complexities and nuances of the debate within Arizona. By defining these contours and unraveling the complexities, one is able to see that the debate over S.B. 1070 goes deeper than the national news media often takes it. This research shows that the primary focus of news coverage in Arizona centered on the issue of jurisdiction, not the arguably more controversial aspect of S.B. 1070 that deals with the ability of law enforcement to stop and question those who might be suspected of being an undocumented immigrant. When examining the stories of people living on the border, it is revealed that security is the main concern for individuals within the state because of the flaring violence. This project also uncovered the fact that not all residents of Arizona are in favor this law. This reality is clearly presented in the more liberal *Daily Star*, and is further supported by a July 2010 *Arizona Republic* poll, which found that 62% of voters supported comprehensive immigration reform, but only 55% supported laws that would resemble S.B. 1070. The research also showed that jurisdiction plays a role in which dimensions receive the most attention within the borders of Arizona.

Based on the framing analysis, location of the newspapers play a role in which issues were at the forefront or received little to no attention.

This focus on Arizona also shed light on the contours of the national debate over immigration policy. As was the case in 2001, security is still at the forefront of the immigration debate. Many lawmakers and citizens fear that if immigration laws are not strict then it could allow for more terrorist violence in America. As was the case in 2001 when the hijackers entered the country with legally issued visas from the federal government. Finally, this project helps to shed light on the role of language in the policy process as a whole. Language is not just used to exclusively define problems, but it can also be used to keep momentum going for a law once it has been passed and is in the implementation stages. Lawmakers, supporters and opponents of S.B. 1070 continue to focus on the law as a platform for future immigration action. Language plays a role in all parts of the policy process and helps to explain and uncover the depths, contours, and nuances of a debate.

Works Cited

Arizona v. United States. 567. 2013

Fronteras Desk. "Brief History of S.B. 1070." 2012.

<http://www.fronterasdesk.org/sb1070/>.

Hirschmann, Albert. *Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy*. Boston: Belknap Press, 1991.

Migration Policy Institute. "New Arizona Law Engulfs Immigration Debate." May 2010.

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/display.cfm?ID=782>.

Montini, Edward J. "The Business of S.B. 1070 is Business." *The Arizona Republic*. April 12, 2011. <http://www.azcentral.com/insiders/EJMontini/2011/4/page/2/>

Pearce, Russell. "The Fight Versus Illegal Immigration Goes On." *The Arizona Republic*. November 12, 2011.

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/opinions/articles/20111114pearce1112-fight-vs-illegal-immigration-will-go.html>

Rocheftort, David, and Roger Cobb, eds. *The Politics of Problem Definition: Shaping the Policy Agenda*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1994.

Stone, Deborah. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. N.p.: W.W. Norton & Co, 2002.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. "Fact Sheet: Delegation of Immigration Authority

Section 287(g) Immigration and Nationality Act." 2011.

<http://www.ice.gov/news/library/factsheets/287g.htm>

"The Truth About S.B. 1070." *The Arizona Republic*. July 28, 2010.

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/opinions/articles/2010/07/28/20100728wed1-28.html>

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Language inundates the world around us. Everyday individuals are saturated with language from all different types of media including social networks and the news media. The words we choose play particular importance within the political realm, as they help to define problems, explain causality, and outline potential policy alternatives. Political language helps to explain why a problem moves from the private realm to the public realm, and shapes solutions that emerge from discussions of policy issues. The dimensions of political language, such as narrative, problem definition and framing, are employed by all types of political actors and stakeholders in potential policy solutions for a given social problem. The current literature on political language explains how language helps to shape perceptions and understanding of complex social issues and influences the policy process at all levels.

Despite the fact that there are many insights into how language influences the policy process, there is still much work to be done in terms of furthering research in the area. First, research is still unclear whether there is a direct causal link between the language used in the political arena and the public's thoughts about the issue at hand. Essentially, it's difficult to prove if what is said about immigration policy by lawmakers, the president, and the news media actually shapes perceptions among the public at large. Everyone interprets things differently based on various and competing life experiences, ideologies, and world views. Also, individuals are saturated with political language from all sides of a particular debate, so it is difficult to say who or what side they may be influenced by. The

study of political language is a conceptual framework, not a theoretical one; therefore it is important for more empirical research to be done regarding how language shapes public opinion around certain issues. Theories are constructed to explain certain phenomena, whereas conceptual frameworks are a symbolic representation of an abstract idea. Because of the limited empirical data on the causal link between language and public opinion and perceptions, it is difficult to pinpoint and isolate certain aspects of political language to determine causality. The study of political language helps to shed light on the abstract uses of rhetoric within the public arena.

Next, it is difficult to isolate the role of political language within the policy process. It has been established that the policy process is cyclical, not linear and that there are a number of factors that determine the outcome of a particular policy debate. Interest groups, administrative needs, and other competing factors play into this process. Finally, political language scholars do not know the degree to which language is employed to strategically shape public opinion. Decades ago, George Orwell argued that language was, in fact, used to manipulate the public to think about issues a certain way and there are still many who follow the Orwellian line of thinking today (Szanto 2007:10). As research continues to be developed in the realm of political language, it is important to continue to explore the arguments Orwell put forth so many years prior. Research in this area could be furthered by interviewing political leaders or political speechwriters to figure out if there is motive behind using certain rhetorical strategies, dimensions of problem definition, narrative, or metaphors.

The case study on the role of metaphors in presidential communication showcased the different uses of metaphors surrounding immigration policy by President George W. Bush and Barack Obama. The literature published on the uses of metaphors suggests that metaphors are the most pervasive use of language. Essentially, our ordinary conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. Metaphorical concepts often have a basis in our cultural and physical experience, and have the potential to be pervasive to an individual based one's worldview. Also, literature on the increasing importance of the rhetorical powers of the president has shown the potential power of the president's voice to orient the public and the legislature to a particular policy outcome.

However, there have been no substantial changes made to national immigration policy during the Bush administration or Barack Obama's first term in office. This may have to do with the fact that the intended audience is not proximal to the metaphors being defined. For instance, the "living in the shadows" metaphor which was used by both presidents sets up a dynamic of "us" and "them." Not many people can relate to the idea of the "other" and it may not sound like someone that they know. Also, there are likely many undocumented individuals who do not view themselves as "living in the shadows." It is difficult to attach proximity to something that individuals are already removed from.

The use of national identity metaphors may not resonate with many people either. The idea of the United States as a "melting pot" does not really garner the same excitement or attachment as other metaphors surrounding national identities or ideas like freedom and liberty. With the seeming increase of anti-immigrant sentiments in many pockets of the country it is difficult for the "melting pot" metaphor to resonate with many individuals because many may not necessarily appreciate the fact that the United States is a meld of

different cultural influences and heritages. Another factor that may lead to the apparent failure of the “melting pot” metaphor to resonate with a broad audience is that there are still feelings of discrimination and racism still ring true throughout many aspects of society. Finally, the “boots on the ground” metaphor does not seem to resonate with audiences either. The degree to which the “boots on the ground” metaphor may impact individuals likely depends on geography. For citizens in Border States this metaphor may resonate because of their proximity to the border and there strong sense of fear surrounding cartel violence coming up from Mexico. Citizens in states that are far away from the border likely do not feel the same sense of urgency to militarize the border to prevent illegal immigration. Also, this metaphor may not resonate with the average American citizen because of how war-weary the nation has become. The idea of “boots on the ground” may simply sound expensive, unnecessary, and exhausting.

Despite the literature on the impacts of metaphors and the rhetorical powers of the president, there has been little movement in regards to the advancement of immigration reform during the George W. Bush administration and President Obama’s first term in office. The inability of these metaphors to drive action in this area may mean that it has been difficult to rally individuals around these images of immigration reform.

Rhetoric of Immigration in Arizona

The case study on the rhetoric of immigration reform within the state of Arizona helped to shed light on the complexities and nuances of the debate over SB 1070. Research revealed that the scope of the debate was broader than in the national news media. The focus of the immigration reform debate within Arizona centered heavily on the ideas of

federalism and jurisdiction. Who has control over immigration enforcement and what role do the states play in legislating immigration policy were the central questions following SB 1070's passage and implementation. Location of the news outlet within the state also appeared to play a role in focus of coverage of the *Arizona Republic* and the *Arizona Daily Star*. The newspapers also lived up to their inherent political biases and even presented biases within articles that were seemingly meant to just present facts. Though there were conclusions reached through this case study, this research still provided more questions than answers.

One question produced related to the intersection of framing and the tenor of coverage. Studying the framing and tenor of news coverage provided substantial results on their own, but there are still questions about how the two are related. Questions still remain around if the frames outlined through the case study are able to be tied to a particular tone. For instance, is the security frame tied to mostly articles that have a negative tone? It might be beneficial to examine this relationship in order to provide greater depth to the conclusions reached through the initial study. Another research avenue is to run a comparative study of the Arizona news media and national news outlets, such as the *New York Times*, in regards to coverage of SB 1070. One can infer what the national news media focused on during the SB 1070 debate, but a comparative study would provide greater insight into the true difference between coverage at the local and national level. Finally, this research raised questions around what the media coverage is like within states that have passed copy-cat SB 1070 legislation. If case studies were conducted in states such as Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina, greater generalizability about state coverage surrounding immigration reform could be generated.

Concluding Insights

Despite the insights generated from the case studies conducted through this research, there are still many questions about the future of immigration reform and what comprehensive immigration reform will look like in the United States. Many decades ago, George Orwell wrote about the potential degradation of the English language. In his essay, “Politics and the English Language” (1946), Orwell argued that the language utilized within political debates has created the audience’s inability to connect ideas being put forth to concrete images associated with their worldview. Essentially, the audience may become more confused about policy solutions being put forth rather than seeing a proposal as a potential remedy for a complex social problem. This, Orwell argued, could cause a decline in the potential for effective policy solutions for an issue. Orwell pointed to the overall decline of debate within political arenas and the potential for that to stall the advancement of policy solutions.

The rhetoric of immigration reform has revolved around the same issues and dimensions at many levels of government. Recently, there has been a push for comprehensive immigration reform, but there are competing and contradicting views for what that should look like. For instance, Democrats tend to see comprehensive immigration reform as having a heavy emphasis on pathways to citizenship, whereas the conservative viewpoint focuses more on enforcement. These conflicting and competing viewpoints make it difficult to come to a solution that balances and properly encompasses both of those proposals. George Orwell pointed out this type of language in his book, *1984*.

Doublethink is the act of simultaneously accepting two mutually contradictory beliefs as correct. The ideas of pathways to citizenship and strengthening enforcement policies at the border are contradictory ideas and are the two major solutions that are pointed to whenever there are discussions about immigration reform at all levels. So far, all that has been proposed in terms of immigration reform have been two opposing extremes, rather than a solution that will meld the two opposing viewpoints into an effective policy solution. The public is being exposed to these two competing ideas only and there has been little to no discussion at the national level around clearing defining what is meant by “comprehensive immigration reform.”

In order to overcome this and prevent debates around immigration reform from going in the same direction, perhaps it is important for legislators to begin to look at other innovative ways to reform immigration. Because of the vast differences in opinion over the direction of reform and controversy surrounding pathways to citizenship and seemingly more harsh enforcement policies, it has been difficult to strike a balance between the two proposals in order to create a truly comprehensive immigration reform policy. Orwell’s predictions he made many decades are still ringing true and playing out in the modern political arena. In order to reach real solutions about complex issues and social problems, the language that is utilized to drive debates must be more meaningful and provide greater insight to potential solutions.

Works Cited

Orwell, George. *1984*. New York: Signet Classic, 1950.

Orwell, George. "Politics and the English Language." 1946

Szántó, András. 2007. *What Orwell Didn't Know: Propaganda and the New Face of American Politics*.
New York: PublicAffairs.