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Framing the President: The Dominant Ideology – A Comprehensive Repertoire of News Frames

Enquadrando o Presidente: a ideologia dominante – repertório compreensivo dos quadros midiáticos

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Abstract:

The theory of a dominant ideology underlying the news remains unacceptable for the commercial press and undermines its legitimacy. For social constructionists, no description or categorization is neutral. If all reporting has a point of view and the news inherently evaluates and frames events, the heuristic task is to demonstrate the existence of a single inventory of repeatedly used and shared "stock phrases" that consistently interpret "objective" events. Our case study examines coverage of U.S. President Bill Clinton in his first two years. Despite the wide number of events occurring and the large number of articles reviewed (N=513), the Clinton presidency was consistently portrayed using a finite and relatively small number of frames. We provide preliminary evidence of an industry-wide inventory of frames used by news workers over time and in a range of newsroom settings.

Key Words: News frames; Dominant ideology; President Bill Clinton.

Resumo:

A teoria de uma ideologia dominante subjacente à notícia continua a ser inaceitável para a imprensa comercial e compromete a sua legitimidade. Para os construcionistas sociais, nenhuma descrição ou categorização é neutra. Se todas as reportagens têm um ponto de vista e as notícias inerentemente avaliam e enquadram eventos, a tarefa heurística é demonstrar a existência de um único inventário repetidamente usado e compartilhado de "frases feitas" que, de forma consistente, interpretam eventos "objetivamente". Nosso estudo de caso examina a cobertura do presidente dos EUA, Bill Clinton, em seus dois primeiros anos. Apesar do grande número de eventos ocorridos e do grande número de artigos analisados (N=513), a presidência de Clinton foi sempre retratada com um número finito e relativamente pequeno de quadros. Nós fornecemos evidências preliminares de um inventário de toda a atividade de organização de quadros utilizados pelos produtores de notícias ao longo do tempo e em uma variedade de configurações de espaços de redação.

Palavras-chave: Quadros midiáticos; Ideologia dominante; Presidente Bill Clinton.

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On November 3, 1992, Bill Clinton won the U.S. presidency by a plurality with 43.2 percent of those who voted. Immediately, opposing politicians and the U.S. media attempted to reinterpret the meaning to the plurality vote. Democrats claimed that since Clinton had received more votes than any other candidate, he had a mandate. On November 4, 1992, Minority Leader Bob Dole argued that he had as much of a mandate as Clinton because Republicans held 43 percent of the Senate. In the instant replay and partisan spin of the election, forgotten was the fact that pluralities have been common occurrences in U.S. presidential elections. Sixteen elections including the 1992 election were won by pluralities – almost one third (31%) of all U.S. presidential elections. Furthermore, three presidents had won elections with pluralities smaller than Clinton's: Andrew Jackson won the 1824 election with 43.1 percent of the vote;[1] Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 election with 39.8 percent; and Woodrow Wilson won the 1912 election with 41.8 percent (Kane, 1998). All three presidents ultimately served two terms as president. No media outlet elaborated on the low turnout, which was 20 to 40 percent below the turnout of enfranchised voters typical in the 19th century (Piven and Cloward, 1988; Teixeira, 1992). Lacking or ignoring historical perspective, the media questioned whether Clinton's election by a mere plurality indicated that Clinton would become a one-term president.

Party Coalitions: Act I

Political theory might have suggested that Clinton's victory signaled the beginning of a new "party system" and a reconstituted Democratic party. Political scientists like Phillips (1969) and Burnham (1970) have characterized the U.S. political tradition as a succession of two-party systems where an alignment of core class, ethnic and regional constituencies has recurrently given the incumbent party a dominant hold on power at the federal level for periods of 20 to 30 years, sometimes more. Periodically, a new third party or reformed second party combines enough out-groups or counter-hegemonic constituencies whose interests have been long ignored, and there is a "critical re-aligning election." Phillips (1969) argued that the election of President Richard Nixon in 1968 marked the emergence of a new Republican majority, based on a coalition of property owners, the professional-managerial stratum of the white-collar working class, the white suburbs, and the "Sunshine states" (in the South and Southwest), plus the states in the Midwest and Rockies Mountains. The "Southern Rim" coalition ended the liberal "New Deal" Democratic alignment (1932-1968). By 1992, Republicans had dominated the White House for 20 of the previous 24 years. Perhaps this election presaged a recombination of centrists staking out claims as fiscal conservatives and social liberals and who called themselves "new Democrats."

Certainly, neither party held the loyalty of most of its own partisan voters. Opinion surveys from 1960 through 1980 repeatedly showed that the public had become less politically active and more distrustful of all public institutions. Only about half of all adults were registered voters, and half of those who did vote no longer identified with either political party. The same broad trends that were fragmenting demographic constituencies permitted a third candidate to challenge the dominant two parties in 1992. Ross Perot won 19 percent of the popular vote. Like the three-way 1912 race with a break-away Progressive Party (a.k.a. the Bull Moose Party) led by former Republican President Theodore Roosevelt, Perot's Independent Party coalesced around the charisma of its eccentric upper class leader. Perot appealed to white-collar workers from both major parties, drawing middle-of-the-road Democrats and even more Republican-leaning moderates.

Yet instead of a new Democratic electoral combination deepening its hold, the Republicans captured Congressional majorities in the 1994 mid-term elections for the first time since the 1950s. Clinton's public approval ratings, initially high, had tumbled. Surveys showed that the general public shared a widespread negative perception of the president. The major media heralded the Republican "revolution" as a new mandate.

Why had the realignment predicted by historical patterns failed to coalesce? Why had Clinton's high public approval ratings fallen by 1994? We suspected the news media, which are on-stage in all public acts and events. The commercial media typically give a new president a "media honeymoon" and postpone a more adversarial stance until late in a president's incumbency (Hess, 1981; Rivers, 1962; Rosten, 1937; Sigal, 1973). Even a cursory examination of Clinton's newspaper coverage suggested that the new president never got a honeymoon. In fact, he had not yet been inaugurated when members of the mainstream press began writing critical articles about the president-elect Clinton, and a few commentators were already predicting a failed Clinton presidency.

Thus, the exigency for this study began with two observations: (1) The political realignment, which historically had been presaged by voters' dissatisfaction with their political options after two or more decades of control by one party, had been thwarted or delayed. (2) The mainstream U.S. media were behaving atypically. Given these observations, we expected that a systematic examination of media discourse might shed light on whether the media had played a role in constraining the nascent realignment of a new Democratic coalition. We turned to frame analysis of newspaper discourse to develop a more detailed and powerful understanding of the structure of news content in

general. We decided to substantively map the finite ways the media "framed" President Clinton.

Class Interests of the Media: Act II

Hellinger and Judd (1994) argue that a facade of democratic legitimacy is maintained by periodic elections. They point out that because democratic legitimacy depends on popular sovereignty, the upper class has seen the importance of manipulating public opinion and elections, especially after the broadening of the franchise to women, African-Americans and waves of impoverished immigrants since the late 19th century. But behind the facade is another aspect of American politics – the unspoken class nature of political control and opinion formation.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, self-employed editor-publishers were part of the bourgeois struggle against aristocratic privilege and the executive power of absolutist monarchy (Boyce, Curran and Wingate, 1978). Anglo-American journalism was permanently imprinted at its birth with a cry for freedom from government censorship and intimidation. Framing the "free press" as the fourth estate helped unite the press in an alliance with the property-owning "commoners" of the third estate in the British parliament, where both sought freedom from arbitrary taxes and government interference. In the 1820s and 1830s in both countries, working class publishers joined free-born white men who demanded the right to vote (Curran, 1977; Harrison, 1974).

In the 1830s when newspapers started using stream-driven presses, they dropped the price per copy to one penny and became increasingly dependent on commercial advertising, which allowed the so-called "penny press" to sell at below the cost of production and thus to expand circulation (Askquith, 1978; Baldasty, 1992; Lee, 1978). Publishers became increasingly wealthy with the rise of mass circulation newspapers. Working class newspapers disappeared. Papers owned by the upper class and managed by a new class of white-collar workers (professionalized reporters and editors) survived by targeting readers with more disposable income. By the late 1800s, the scale of capital investment had turned the newspaper tycoons into nouveau riche press barons (Lee, 1976, 1978; Trachtenberg, 1982). In the 1890s, the corporate response to partisan investigative journalism was to underwrite public relations on a scale sufficient to deflect the threat of a populist party realignment. In the same period, upper class publishers endowed the first journal schools and supported the rise of a competing model of "objective" journalism that is factual, fragmented and decontextualized.

In the 1920s the number of U.S. dailies peaked. Most cities had papers locked in "press wars" that lasted for decades. As they eliminated their competitors, the surviving monopoly newspapers came to depend on upscale readers and especially on mass consumption industries, such as big-box retailers who have been major advertisers. A "third wave" of merges, acquisitions and leveraged buyouts began in the 1970s (Phillips, 2002). As a result by the 1990s, all the media industries had become oligopolies, and at the local level, newspapers had become monopolies in 98 percent of the cities (Picard, *et al.*, 1988; Cranberg, Bezanson, and Soloski, 2001; Bagdikian, 2004). Corporate groups owned 82 percent of the newspapers (Audit Bureau of Circulations, 1996). Schiff (forthcoming) showed that the "moderate" wing within the upper class owned the overwhelming majority of national and local newspaper companies. He found that the majority of chain owners in the newspaper industry across the country were not neo-conservatives but rather Republicans who tended to be socially liberal, economically conservative and hawkish on foreign policy.

The conglomerates integrated the commodity production of the news into the overall marketing and profit strategy of the parent firms. Publicly traded corporations, especially the conglomerates that arose as a result of deregulation, saw media properties as cash cows to finance further consolidation. McManus (1994) described the short-term bottom-line pressure of profit-optimizing, diversified, media-owning corporations as "market-driven journalism." Underwood (1995) called it "MBA journalism." The net result, they argued, was that a generation of corporate owners produced more and more homogenized news content. In other words, homogenized messages produced by oligopoly media conglomerates owned by the upper class seemed to be drowning out independently owned media voices as well as the dispersed and self-organizing points of view of counter-hegemonic groups.

However, media ownership is not homogeneous as Lundberg (1937) showed in his encyclopedic analysis of the U.S. upper class before and after the 1929 Depression. He identified factions within the upper class, their ties to competing industrial sectors, and their connections to newspaper chains.

Factions go back to the Federalists who defeated Tory sympathizers, as Burnham (1970) recounted, at the beginning of a series of two-party systems, which have dominated U.S. politics. In tracing upper class partisan beliefs, Hartz (1955) goes back to their common heritage when the bourgeoisie overthrew the British nobility and became the de facto upper class. Eventually, the Northern mercantile and manufacturing upper class

defeated the Southern slave-holding plantation upper class. After the Civil War, upper class northeastern business interests dominated both parties (Burnham, 1970; Domhoff, 2006; Phillips, 2002). The big business wing of the Republican Party (1900-1932) was overwhelmed by the Democratic "New Deal" coalition (1932-1968), which in turn gave way to the Republican "Southern rim" strategy (Burnham 1970; Phillips, 1969). In the mid-1970s, a new group of self-made centi-millionaire "cowboys" appeared to challenge the northeast wing of the upper class (Dye, 1995; Domhoff, 1972; Oglesby, 1977).

In short, we expected press ownership to be divided along factional lines, which paralleled and reflected in their control of the both political parties (Domhoff, 1972, 2006).

Media Bias: Act III

In the United States, news organizations claim to offer fair, accurate and thorough portrayals of newsworthy events and developments. These claims are consistent with norms encoded in the inter-war period when journalists formed associations and sought professional status (Society of Professional Journalists, 2009 [1926]). Objectivity is a standard to which journalists aspire. Established newsroom norms of objectivity include: non-partisan coverage of political campaigns, neutral presentation of controversial issues, balancing use of sources from opposing sides, segregating editorial comment to separate pages, boxing and labeling advertorial items, avoiding derogatory adjectives and inflammatory language, and maintaining an invisible curtain between the business side and the news side of the paper. Journalists were responsible to the public at large – not to owners, advertisers, private interests or the government (McManus, 1994).

While most journalists argue that the mainstream press still continue to adhere to such standards, critics contend that MBA journalism has replaced the professional criteria of what is newsworthy with a managerial strategy that requires editors and reporters to become marketeers, catering to the immediate preferences of the local audience with the most disposable income and discretionary time. Lost is the fiduciary responsibility to the long-term enlightened collective self-interests of explicitly competing publics. Lost too is the notion of bias as media campaigns (for example, Goldberg, 2002) that may be more systemic and deeper than instances of bias embedded in individual news items in details at the story level, such as the balance of sources and word choice.

Numerous studies of election and presidential campaigns in the 1980s and 1990s found bias in partisan cues (D'Alessio and Allen, 2000; Dalton, Beck, and Huckfeldt, 1998; Fico

and Cote, 1997; Niven, 1999); visual cues, emotive depictions and graphic imagery (Coleman and Banning, 2006; Grimes and Drechsel, 1996; Piper-Aiken, 2003; Waldman and Devitt, 1998); elite agendas and incumbency (Daniel, 2000; Fico, Clogston, and Pizante, 1986; Fine, 1994a, 1994b; Graber, 1976; Watts, *et al*., 1999); and inter-media framing effects (McCleod, *et al*., 1996). Political bias can be manifest through repeated thematic choices, privileged sources, and selection criteria for prominence or exclusion (Fallows, 1997; Goldberg, 2002; Hallin, 1986). Media "facts" have displaced facts observed by people in their ordinary lives; pseudo-events (Boorstin, 1962) have obfuscated participatory political events.

Framing studies have offered some of the richest investigations into media bias and its impact on political realities. Researchers have demonstrated how the media use frames to "prime" their audiences, that is, to set the standards to judge political actors and policies (Iyangar and Kinder, 1987; Iyangar, 1991; McCombs, Lopez-Escobar, and Llamas, 2000). But priming is only one example of framing. Framing is more complex than agenda setting (e.g., Goffman, 1974).

In his wide-ranging synthesis of critical theory, empirical studies, and audience/voter research, Gomes (2004) described how dramaturgical frames set the agenda and reproduce journalism as political theater. He persuasively demonstrated how television news overwhelmed the Brazilian political scene and remolded social reality in accordance with the codes, logic, grammar and routines of commercial spectacles.

However, most framing studies of electoral campaigns suffer from a bias favoring quantification that has led to a meager number of available frames. Lacking ethnographic field work to typify phrase categories actually in use, the result is that fewer than a half dozen frames account for much of the available research literature (e.g., Miller and Benham, 1994; Piper-Aiden, 2003; Rhee, 1997; Serini, Powers and Johnson, 1998). As Entmann (2007) observed, framing bias remains under-theorized despite so many studies.

Meanwhile, those who study social movement frames have uncovered a wealth of competitive frames (for example, Chong and Druckman, 2007; Porto, 2007). They also described the structural conditions, cultural contexts and non-media back-channels that influence political awareness (Frenkel-Faran and Lehman-Wilzig, 2007; Fumagalli, 2007; McVeigh, Myers, and Sikkink, 2004; Miceli, 2005; Rew and Khan, 2006; Spielvogel, 2005). "Issue frames" have a complex relationship to framing strategies (Hipsher,

2007; Schoenbach and Semtko, 1992), multiple segmented constituencies (Hearney and Rojas, 2006), the "national interest" (Dimitrova and Connolly-Ahern, 2007; Key, 1965; Liebes, 1992; Moaz, 1990; Reese and Buckalew, 1995); the propaganda model (Herman and Chomsky, 1988; McGrath, 2007; Sahr, 1996) and the dominant ideology thesis (Kao and Tillinghast, 1999; Schiff, 1996, 2004, 2006).

What is missing so far is grounded, ethnographic work to locate and describe a comprehensive universe of culturally and historically situated issue frames. Could an ethnographic frame analysis of the language of the U.S. press identify and catalog recurrent media frames and could that inventory shed light on the nature of the relationships among news corporations and individual newspapers owned by the upper class, and public attitudes about political issues and leaders? The authors of this study reasoned that, if the news media had influenced the turn-around in public opinion toward President Clinton during a period of critical realignment of core constituencies, then recurrent stock interpretations of the Clinton administration as revealed in a frame analysis might represent an industry-wide consensus over a range of issues and extended time periods. If so, the results could constitute *prima facie* evidence that the shared cognitive maps reflected an upper class ideology or a class-wide political agenda, or both. In short, identifying a small finite subset of frames in industry-wide use would be the first stage in substantiating our thesis that press bias consists of class bias in favor of a routinely ignored but powerful dominant ideology.

Dramaturgy of Political Frames: Act IV

Diverse revolutionary leaders like Lenin (1969 [1906]) and Hitler (1999 [1925-6]) as well as social movement analysts (Tarde, 1989 [1901]; Rudé, 1964; Gamson, 1992) have pointed out that "stock phrases" and "slogans" mobilize mobs and social movements by expressing the grievances of the masses and their sense of injustice. Burke (1969a [1945], 1969b [1950]), Schattschneider (1960), and Gamson (1992) conceived of political conflict as an interactive sequence of staged or "framed" communicative acts, where what matters is the use of resonant appeals to mobilize an on-stage but inactive by-standing public. A frame uses a rhetoric of motives, spotlights the issues defined by two dialectically contending protagonists and mobilizes a deep structure of routinely unnoticed ideological assumptions. For both activists and analysts, a frame is a leitmotif at a deeper structure of cognitive cultural patterns, and it is the key trigger mechanism underlying socio-political conflict.

Goffman (1974) raised the concept of framing to the level of a general theory. He demonstrated the power of frame analysis to examine symbolic interaction. Goffman produced sophisticated, elaborate and subtle interpretations of social action, role construction, ordinary conversations, communicative acts, and dyadic and dialectical relationships in everyday life. Just as dramaturgical frames have been used in the study of social movements and political communication, frame analysis can be applied to mediated discourse to reveal deeply embedded cognitive and cultural patterns.

Such a line of inquiry has advantages. If a ubiquitous media culture exists and is embraced by individual news organizations, frame analysis could be used to unmask the underlying portrayals of reality held by that culture. It would be reasonable to expect that such a media culture would share a finite set of descriptive and evaluative stock interpretations shared by diverse newspaper ownership groups across multiple issues and throughout geographical regions of the country. Conducting a frame analysis of news stories disseminated by different media corporations could reveal shared themes, images and interpretations of reality that constitute the frames used to proselytize for the world view of a dominant media culture, which is reflective of its corporate owners. Indeed, because media frames are public and published (Habermas, 1973), a set of descriptive and evaluative stock interpretations by diverse newspaper ownership groups across multiple regions and issues even in just one historical period might constitute the beginning of a finite map of cognitive categories in the deep structure of everyday culture.

Despite the large number of studies using the metaphor of a communicative frame, social researchers have only a minimal explicit description of the logic, grammar and structure of media frames. Frame theory has not yet generated an accomplished body of findings and thus remains a model for a research agenda.

Early researchers who examined language, cognition and social interaction posited that meaning was a socially constructed reality subject to routine *post facto* interpretations of events as human beings interact to collectively solve practical problems of life (e.g., Suassuer ([1915] 1966); Wittgenstein, [1933-35] 1958; Garfinkel, 1967; Schutz, 1971-73). Over relatively short periods of time, human beings manufacture their own symbolic environment and then reproduce a dominant culture – in which competent members learn, understand and share only partially – in an effort to negotiate and renegotiate their differences of interpretation in order to carry out practical action.

Goffman (1974) identified framing as a basic underlying process and hypothesized that ordinary people apply culturally available frames to everyday experiences to achieve shared meaning. Gitlin (1980, p. 7) defined media frames as "[p]ersistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse." Ideologies are expressed through stock arguments, slogans and icons that frame issues in terms that mobilize partisans and bystanders through metaphors, catch phrases, visual images, moral appeals and symbolic devices to provide interpretation and meaning to newly occurring events (Gamson, 1992; Kanjirathinkal and Hickey, 1992; Schattschneider, 1960).

For Goffman, frame analysis is a methodology used it to identify the deeply embedded frames utilized during communicative acts, whether those acts are taking place among ordinary members of a community in everyday life or they are portraying an event through a media channel. Frame analysis undertakes a detailed examination of communicative acts to identify the frames that have been used by protagonists to gain prominence in the battle to assign meaning to events.

Given all the foregoing, we need a fully "operationalized" set of criteria to identify the occurrence of a frame in a news story. Seven characteristics of frames guided the examination of media discourse to explain and characterize political events in this study. (1) Within a frame, one matter is highlighted or spotlighted and in focus to the exclusion of other matters that are implicitly less relevant or salient. (2) There is a tendency in communicative interaction towards dichotomizing and polarizing the protagonists, who each characterize themselves as heroes and the others as enemies or bogeymen. (3) A frame is a label, factual claim or descriptive portrayal. It identifies grievances or unresolved problems that define a basis for confrontation. Often the matter at stake is the unequal distribution of benefits or the unequal access to scarce resources. The importance of the frame is its common-sense resonance in singularizing or encapsulating a social conflict. (4) A frame always puts one matter in the context of other matters. The background context is often a criterion by which a foregrounded event, person or policy might be evaluated. Frame analysis allows for multiple, competing "collective self-interests" defined by the ordinary members of actually existing self-perceived communities. The notion of overlapping but competing reference groups is an improvement over the universalizing assumptions in Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, James Mills, John Stuart Mills and Adam Smith, who all posited a single public interest or a homogenized aggregate of atomized self-interests. (5) A frame establishes the outside boundaries of what is and is not relevant to further consideration of an issue, and thus

limits the claims by the protagonists. It also implicitly and necessarily presumes an uncontested common ground that can become the basis for negotiated settlements. (6) A frame is an implicit call to action. It redefines identities and interests of participants, bystanders and non-members as well as their interactive relationships. A frame has behavioral and policy implications for purposive and coordinated action. A frame is a performative act of communicating in order to explain and persuade passive bystanders that they have an interest in the outcome of an ongoing conflict and to call upon them to join one side of the social-political struggle against the other side. (7) A frame excludes "et cetera" considerations and non-members as outside the frame. It stops and excludes the infinite logical regress of binary categories of "diffèrance" that define words, signs and signifiers with ever more generic words, signs or signifiers (Derrida, 1981). It also stops or excludes the iteration of an infinite series of examples or instances (Garfinkel, 1967). It specifies or "instantiates" a concrete social reality as "the" dominant reality (Schutz, 1962).

In particular, a news story always has an angle and necessarily leads with a source from one point of view, which usually means privileging that side of the story despite claims by journalists to being neutral and objective. The media then must be a part of the struggle between established and oppositional sources to portray social and political reality.

Based on findings by researchers of organizational culture (e.g., Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983; Schneider, 1990; Smircich and Calás, 1987), one expectation is that each newspaper's corporate culture would influence the descriptive and evaluative stock arguments in use. Another expectation is that, to the extent that the ideology of upper class newspaper owners has permeated their newsrooms, the stock arguments in use would to be shared, overlapping and finite in each historic period.

Hence, our research objectives are to discover, situate and list the discursive phrases and cognitive schemata that comprise the frames utilized by news organizations and to catalogue the argumentative themes that were used to describe and at the same time evaluate the Clinton administration. Secondly, our objectives are to examine the expectations that we call, respectively, the corporate culture hypothesis and the upper class ideology hypothesis.

Methodology

This paper is a comparative case study that examines how newspapers treated the first two years of the Clinton presidency. We sampled four widely dispersed, regional dailies: *Chicago Tribune, Houston Chronicle, Los Angeles Times* and *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

The Sample. The papers selected for this study had to meet the following criteria. (1) They had to be among the nation's top 20 newspapers based on their weekday total paid circulation. (2) They had to have regional distribution in one of four regions of the nation: the Midwest, the South, the West/Mountain states, and the Northeast/Middle Atlantic.[2] (3) They had to be owned by separate parent corporations. And (4) they had to be ideologically diverse. The four papers in this study are among the largest papers in the country; each represents one of the designated regions included in the study; each was at the time owned by a different corporation; and they had established ideological reputations. The *Chicago Tribune* and *Houston Chronicle* were usually considered to be conservative papers while the *L.A. Times* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* were usually considered to be liberal papers.

Using event histories from Clinton's first two years, we decided to include two specific time periods and two prominent controversial issues in our sample. The two time periods chosen were (1) from election day to inauguration day and (2) Clinton's first 100 days in office. These periods were chosen as defining periods when public impressions of the new president were being formed and when the media "primed" the public in the sense of establishing criteria by which to measure and evaluate the president, his administration and his policies (Iyengar, 1991). Two highly salient issues in 1993 and 1994 were also chosen – one concerning domestic policy and the other concerning foreign policy. The most central domestic issue of Clinton's first two years was clearly the debate over health care. The most divisive foreign policy issue and the most serious military commitment that Clinton did not inherit from the Bush administration was the intervention in Haiti.

The sample was further limited by additional criteria. (1) Because the front page is the most heavily read and edited part of the paper, a story had to appear on the front page in the main "A" section. Keywords were used to select stories from the front pages. Stories selected for inclusion in the sample for the first two time periods had to have the keyword "Clinton" in the headline, sub-head or lead paragraph. For the two issues sampled, stories had to have the word "Clinton" **and** either the keywords "health" or "Haiti"; or else they had to paired as a subject keywords.

The universe was defined as front page stories that used specified keywords in the most prominent segments of the stories. We found 513 stories from the four newspapers that met the criteria for inclusion in the sample.

Finally, the sample was further limited to include only specific portions of any given article. Journalistic texts are highly structured. Reporters and editors routinely use narrative structure and marking techniques to tell a story. In headlines and sub-heads, editors highlight, digest and interpret the "angle" of the story. Most hard-news leads consist of the first sentence and rarely continue beyond the first paragraph. Typically in hard news stories, the most important information that supports and elaborates on the lead is put "high up" in the story, so we separately examined each of the first five paragraphs. Soft-news stories are also often formulaic with the "nut graf" expected to follow the first few sentences or paragraphs of the "feature lead." In a feature story, the ending may recap the story or put it in perspective. So, we examined and coded the most prominent segments (the headline, sub-head, lead paragraph, paragraphs two through five and ending paragraphs) of each story whether hard- or soft- news.

Coding the Sample. Based on the understandings of the nature of frames as presented in the previous section, we utilized seven questions in examining news stories for evidence of frames. These questions are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Seven Questions to Guide the Frame Analysis

1. What is the one conflict spotlighted in the foreground?
2. Who are the polarized heroes and bogeymen / enemies, and how are they characterized or typified?
3. What is/are the issue/s at stake?
4. In what encapsulated stock phrase is the issue portrayed in terms of a community of interests and belief?
5. What are the uncontested constituents, issues, arrangements and assumptions that exist in the background?
6. What verbal techniques are used to mobilize bystanders in the background?
7. What "etcetera" considerations and non-members are excluded as outside the frame?

By coding structurally located, separate sentences, the authors were able to more closely detail what journalists may have anticipated to be the assumptions, inferences and

judgments of readers. We sought structural locations, sentence-length units and coding rules that would make frame analysis more systematic and less impressionistic.

Finally, even if news stories in our sample dealt with other matters, we coded only assumptions, implications and connotations with regard to President Clinton, his administration or his policies.

Issue Frames. Each news story in the study was coded according to the issue frames that were present. Issue frames were developed inductively. Initially, we used the *Wall Street Journal* to develop the categories, reasoning that a business-oriented paper would be more critical of a Democratic president and hence its evaluative slant might be more visible. We refined the categories as each researcher separately applied the frame categories to the *Houston Chronicle* and the *Philadephia Inquirer*. The first coder-author who had applied the draft category scheme to a liberal newspaper then used the refined frames to code a conservative paper; and the second coder-author did the opposite, switching from an initial conservative paper to a liberal paper in the final round.

We coded each sentence and found that a number of categories were frequently used in a given story. We looked for the dominant frame that encapsulated the primary theme, angle and evaluative thrust of the story. We gave priority to a dominant frame based on repetition of the frame as well as the priority of its placement. Positions were prioritized (from the highest priority in descending order) as the headline, sub-head, lead paragraph and ending paragraphs as compared to positions in the body of the text in paragraphs 2, 3, 4 or 5.

Hypotheses

Our study examines three variables: newspapers, periods or issues, and frames. Logically, there are three combinations of three variables taken two at a time. From such comparisons, we generated eight hypotheses (H1 through H8). We were also interested in any inferences we might be able to draw about the relationship between issue frames and the more general notion of a hegemonic ideology (Gramsci, 1971; Hallin, 1986, 1987).

Newspapers and Periods/Issues. We expected papers would differ on which issues and periods they covered intensively. The purposive sampling of ownership and regional differences allowed us to examine media agenda differences and, presumably, competing collective self-interests.

H1: Newspapers differ in the number of front-page stories published in the time periods and on the issues.

Periods/Issues and Frames. One of our primary research purposes was to develop a grounded theory of the most common and repetitive frames in news discourse. We expected to find routinized and standardized ways of conceptualizing and phrasing activities in the language-sharing subculture of professional journalists. We expect that journalists might have different ways of understanding and describing different domains of activity and conflict. With regard to any domain of discourse, we expect to see recurrent stock arguments, catch phrases and issue frames. We expect many overlapping characterizations and many portrayals that are specific to each issue domain.

We sought to label each frame with an evocative phrase that captured the sense and the range of meaning that the frame offered. We put these labels in quotation marks to indicate that the newspapers were referring to and invoking such considerations, often by proposing a standard by which to consider and evaluate a given action or policy. Frequently, the newspapers played up or played down a frame offered by a source who was interpreting her/his own or someone else's activity or policy. We never assumed that every source's frame was just out there and had an equal chance of being used in a story. Reporters and editors actively construct their stories favoring or discrediting sources with their frames. Word choice is an obvious tip-off to the journalist's orientation. We examined whether, over time, specific journalistic professionals or particular newspapers showed a pattern framing of President Clinton.

To characterize or describe a frame, we looked for natural language phrases that identified the issue at stake (the third component in our model). At first, we simply excerpted a central phrase from each story. We looked for taken-for-granted expectations embedded in the stories. In other words, we looked for descriptions of Clinton's actions and policies where some evaluative perspective was embedded in the text but not explicitly justified. Our approach was that of grounded theory, which advocates starting from direct ethnographic description as a reiterative method to develop higher-level categories as new cases introduce new categories or reproduce previously found categories (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Glaser, 2001; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). We progressively combined the natural phraseology into a more limited number of language frames.

H2: A subset of relatively few frames are used in all the stories.

H3: The most frequently used sub-set of frames overlap periods and issues.

Newspapers and Frames. Among the most interesting questions that this study addresses is the universality of frames used by journalists. If language communities implicitly agree to utilize a limited number of frames to guide their discourse, we surmised that each newspaper would employ a limited number of frames to guide their readers' responses and that different newspapers would not use the same subset of frames. We expect that ideological coherence might be the result of differential selection, socialization and reinforcement that might be managed at more than one organizational level. The process of rationalizing a set of beliefs and managing ideological legitimacy might take place at competing levels: within individual newsrooms, across the newspaper industry owned by an upper class, between papers oriented to competing political parties, or across the entire journalistic profession. Our data will allow us to look for subsets of often used frames that might differ among all newspapers, be the same across all newspapers, or be different between liberal as opposed to conservative newspapers. These three possible results could support competing theses about organizational culture, political party bias or hegemonic ideology. If we find one pattern rather than the others, that pattern might suggest that one level of ideological coherence is more important than the others.

H4: The most frequently used subset of frames among conservative newspapers differ from the most frequently used subset of frames among liberal papers, suggesting the importance of political party ideology.

H5: The most frequently used subset of frames vary from newspaper to newspaper, suggesting the importance of organizational culture.

Frames and Hegemonic Ideology. If we find a set of industry-wide ideological frames, we might draw two different conclusions. Industry-wide frames might result from professional socialization. Alternatively, industry-wide frames might suggest the importance of a hegemonic ideology (Gramsci, 1971; Hallin, 1986, 1987).

H6: A subset of often used frames are shared by all newspapers, suggesting the importance of either an industry-wide professional

ideology (of journalists) or a class-wide upper class ideology (of newspaper owners).

Frames, Newspapers and Ideology. Finally, we posited hypotheses 4, 5 and 6 as competing hypotheses. Each hypothesis is derived from a different theoretical perspective. Indeed, media scholars are offered at least four competing theories based respectively on the determinate importance of political party ideology, *sui generis* organizational cultures, a value-neutral professional ideology and a class-based dominant ideology. We reasoned that one mass communication theory would be better than the others.

H7: Among H4, H5 and H6, only one hypothesis is correct.
H8: A relatively small, finite number of frames adequately describe the "angle" or news point of stories, regardless of newspaper, region, reputed political ideology of the newspaper.

Results

We identified 37 frames in the 513 stories in the sample. The sample constituted the entire universe of all eligible stories that we found.

Newspapers and Periods/Issues

Table 2 simply describes the sample. The universe was defined as front-page stories that used keywords in the most prominent segments of the stories.

Newspapers and Periods/Issues

Table 2. The Sample – Newspapers and Issues/Periods

	Periods and Issues				
	Pre-Inaugural	**First 100 Days**	**Health Care**	**Haiti**	**Total**
Newspapers					
Chicago Tribune	43 [31 %]	28 [21 %]	36 [27 %]	28 [21 %]	135 [100 %]
Houston Chronicle	50 [35 %]	56 [39 %]	21 [15 %]	17 [12 %]	144 [100 %]
Los Angeles Times	3 [4 %]	13 [16 %]	41 [52 %]	22 [28 %]	79 [100 %]
Philadelphia Inquirer	47 [30 %]	50 [32 %]	40 [26 %]	18 [12 %]	155 [100 %]
	143	147	138	85	513

Surprisingly, the number of front page stories that each newspaper devoted to Clinton, his administration or his policies was roughly equal, except for the *L.A. Times* (135, 144, 79 and 155).

The number of front-page stories about Clinton varied over time. Notably, the conservative *Houston Chronicle* differed most starkly from the liberal *Los Angeles Times*. The Houston paper covered the pre-inaugural period and the first 100 days extensively on page one while Clinton's major domestic and foreign issues received mostly inside coverage. In contrast, Clinton's activities during the pre-inaugural period and during the first 100 days of his presidency were only mildly interesting to the *L. A. Times* while the paper covered Clinton and his administration extensively during the two policy controversies later.

Overall, the most prominent coverage was devoted to the travails of the president during the two periods but with the health care issue receiving almost the same coverage. The most striking regularity is that three out of four papers devoted about one-third of their Clinton coverage to the pre-inaugural period, compared to coverage of stories included in the other three sub-samples, which lasted longer and actually occurred after he became president.

As hypothesized, (H1) newspapers do differ in the number of stories published in the time periods and on the issues.

Issue Frames

We made an inventory of 34 "stock phrases" that encapsulated each frame. For each frame, we constructed a lexicon that defined each frame using natural language descriptions. We found 20 frames dealing with expectations about the president, his administration or its policies. Five categories treated government, politicians and the political "process." Four frames focused on expectations about foreign policy, and five frames concerned the economy.

The inventory consisted of frames that were used in prominent positions in the sampled stories. Of these frames, not all were used as a dominant frame, however. We successfully identified a frame in about 97 percent of the stories (499 out of 513).

Indeed, these facts seem to support our argument about a limited number of conceptual frameworks. A relatively small, finite number of frames did seem to adequately describe the "angle" or news point of almost all the stories.

Hypothesis 2 is confirmed.

Frames and Periods/Issues

If we inspect the top five most frequently used categories for each period or issue, 14 frames account for the majority of frames in each domain (period or issue), and cumulatively, those 14 frames account for 70.4 percent (361 stories) of all stories. Five of the most frequent frames were used to portray two or more periods or issues. The top 19 most used frames (55.9 percent) out of 34 potential ways to frame a period or issue occurred in 84.6 percent of stories. Considered either way, the limited number of frames is noteworthy.

Hypothesis 3 is confirmed. The most frequently used subset of frames characterized and overlapped all periods and issues.

Table 3. Most-Used Frames and Periods/Issues (Number of Occurrences [Percent])

Rank	Media Frames	Pre-Inaugural	First 100 Days	Health Care	Haiti	Sub-totals
1	"He's got a plan; I've got a [win-win] plan"	19 [13.5]	30 [20.8]	31 [23.1]	0	80
2-tie	"Don't back down /Clinton's backing down"	5	6	2	28 [43.8]	41
2-tie	"The president compromises/ negotiates/ seeks harmony."	27 [19.1]	5	6	3	41
4	"He's facing strong or increasing opposition."	6	14 [9.7]	8 [6.0]	5 [6.2]	33
5	"Promises, promises."	7 [5.0]	11 [7.6]	7	4	29
6	"Politics is a horse race; some win, some lose, some get hurt."	6	6	9 [6.7]	5 [8.1]	26

7	"He can't stay on or set an agenda."	6	8 [5.6]	7	3	24
8	"Protect democracy/free markets/human rights."	3	8 [5.6]	0	10 [12.5]	21
9	"Politics is image/hype."	11 [7.8]	2	6	0	19
10	"He's a tax and spend Democrat."	4	10 [6.9]	2	1	17
11-tie	This is a make-or-break political test	2	3	5	4	14
11-tie	He's a communicator/ salesman	5	5	4	0	14
13	Government/ Democrats/ Clinton fixes won't work /aren't needed	0	4	6	3	13
14-tie	"He lacks business support; his plan hurts business."	0	3	8 [6.0]	0	11
14-tie	"Politics is horse trading/ quid pro quo."	0	0	11 [8.2]	0	11
14-tie	"Carry a big stick."	0	0	0	11 [13.8]	11
17-tie	"He feels your pain."	4	3	3	0	10
17-tie	"He's a mediator/ problem solver	3	3	4	0	10
19	It's broken"	7 [5.0]	0	2	0	9
--	**19 MOST FREQUENT FRAMES**	**108 [76.6]**	**121 [84.0]**	**121 [90.3]**	**72 [90.0]**	**422 [84.6]**
--	18 Less frequent frames	46	44	39	42	77
	SUB-TOTALS	**141 [100]**	**144 [100]**	**134 [100]**	**80 [100]**	**499 [100]**
	No frame category	2	3	4	5	14
	TOTALS	**143**	**147**	**138**	**85**	**513**

The No. 1 frame ("He's got a plan" or "I've got a plan") was used to frame stories in the first two periods and the Haiti issue. The frames ranked No. 2 through No. 7 were each used in stories about all four domains (periods and issues). One of the frames that tied for No. 2 ("Don't back down/Clinton's backing down") was proportionately the single

most used frame and accounted for 43.8 percent the stories about Haiti. The other frame that tied for No. 2 ("The president is compromising, negotiating, seeking harmony") was the most used frame between Clinton's election and his inauguration. Four of the five most used frames in the pre-inaugural period seem to fit a pattern. They set up a future orientation to the news (No. 1) or else a tone of skepticism (No. 2), doubt (No. 4) and cynicism (No. 9) – all projecting to an imagined future rather than monitoring a past reality. The fact that stories written in the early days of the administration when a new president could not reasonably have been able to accomplish his policy objectives suggests how media priming sets seemingly neutral measures of performance but how a premature and unrealistic time standard can alter perception and undermine support for those policies.

Table 7: Most-Used Frames and Periods/Issues

		Periods and Issues			
Rank	**Media Frames**	**Pre-Inaugural**	**First 100 Days**	**Haiti**	**Health Care**
3.	"The president is compromising, negotiating, seeking harmony."	27 [18.9%]	5	3	6
1.	"He's got a plan; I've got a [win-win] plan."	19 [13.3%]	30 [20.4%]	31 [30.7%]	
9	"Politics is image/hype."	11 [7.7%]	2		6
–.	"It's broken."	7 [4.9%]		2	
4.	"He's facing strong or increasing opposition."	6	14 [9.5%]	5 [7.1%]	8 [7.9%]
5.	"Promises, promises."	7 [4.9 %]	11 [7.5%]	4	7
9.5.	"He's a tax and spend Democrat."	4	10 [6.8%]	1	2
6.	"He can't stay on or set an agenda."	6	8 [5.4%]	3	7
2.	"Don't back down/Clinton's backing down."	5	6	28 [40%]	2
13.5	"Carry a big stick."			11 [15.7%]	
7.	"Protect democracy/free markets/human rights."	3	8 [5.4%]	10 [14.3%]	
8	"Politics is a horse race; some win, some lose, some get hurt."	6	6	5 [7.1%]	9 [8.9%]
–	"Politics is horse trading, quid pro quo."				11 [10.9%]
	"He lacks business support; his plan hurts business."		3	8 [7.9%]	
	SUB-TOTALS = 371	**97**	**103**	**70**	**101**
	[72.3 %]	**[67.8 %]**	**[70.1 %]**	**[82.4 %]**	**[73.2 %]**
–.	Other/ no category	8 [5.6%] 3	1		
–.	Less frequently used frames and cases removed from the table	38	41	41	37
	TOTALS = 513 [100 %]	**143**	**147**	**85**	**138**

Table 4. Most used Frames and Newspapers (Number of Occurrences [Percent])

		Number of stories [percent]				Sub-Totals
Rank	**Most used Frames**	***Chicago Tribune***	***Houston Chronicle***	***L.A. Times***	***Philadelphia Inquirer***	
1	"He's got a plan; I've got a [win-win] plan."	**31 [23]**	7	5	**37 [23]**	80
2	"Don't back down/ Clinton's backing down."	4	**18 [13]**	**8 [10]**	**11 [7]**	41
3	"The president compromises/ negotiates/ seeks harmony."	1	**11 [8]**	**6 [8]**	**23 [15]**	41
4	"He's facing strong or increasing opposition."	**15 [11]**	7	**7 [9]**	4	33
5	"Promises, promises."	3	**17 [12]**	**6 [8]**	3	29
6	"Politics is a horse race; some win, some lose, some get hurt."	**12 [9]**	2	3	**9 [6]**	26
7	"He can't stay on or set an agenda."	5	**10 [7]**	4	5	24
8	"Protect democracy/free markets/human rights."	**13 [10]**	5	3	0	21
9	"Politics is image/hype."	2	3	5	**9 [6]**	19
10	"He's a tax and spend Democrat."	0	**15 [10]**	2	0	17
11	"He's a communicator/ salesman."	3	0	0	**11 [6]**	14
12	"This is a make-or-break political test."	4	3	0	7	14
13	"Government/ Democratic/ Clinton fixes won't work/aren't needed."	3	2	**6 [8]**	2	13
14	"Politics is horse trading, quid pro quo."	1	1	**9 [11]**	0	11
	Collapsed cells*	38	41	14	37	130

	Sub-Totals	**97 [72]**	**101 [71]**	**64 [82]**	**121 [77]**	**383[75]**
	TOTALS	**135 [100]**	**142 [100]**	**78 [100]**	**158 [100]**	**513 [100]**

Note: * Less frequently used frames, cases removed, errors, and "other/no category"

When we compared the papers in terms of their reputed ideological differences, the liberal and conservative papers share six of the 14 most used frames. In addition, two of the most used frames were found in three newspapers and four others were found in two newspapers. Of the other most used frames, seven frames were used frequently by just one paper, and one frame was used frequently but was not among the top frames for any given paper. The six most used frames that liberal and conservative papers shared did account for almost half (about 49 percent) of all stories.

Hypothesis 4 is neither supported nor confirmed. The most frequently used subset of frames among conservative newspapers differ about half the time from the subset of frames most frequently used by liberal papers, suggesting that political party ideology might be important in some newspapers and not others.

Our purposive sample sought to maximize differences in corporate ownership and regional location, assuming such factors might create unique differences in newsroom culture. Given the 34 frames that we found, any given newspaper would have a 3 percent random chance of using one of the frames in a story. If we restrict our focus to the top 19 categories, a paper would have about a 7 percent random chance of using a given frame in any specific story. With so many response categories and yet such substantial overlap (only six frames accounted for almost half the stories), we concluded that the data had enough ambiguities and enough overlap that we could not draw clear conclusions.

Hypothesis 5 is inconclusive: We cannot conclude the most frequently used subset of frames varies from newspaper to newspaper, which would have suggested the importance of organizational culture.

Hypothesis 6 is inconclusive: We cannot conclude a single subset of often used frames is shared by all newspapers, which would have suggested the importance of either an industry-wide professional ideology (of journalists) or a class-wide upper class ideology (of newspaper owners).

Hypothesis 7 is inconclusive: Among hypotheses 4, 5 and 6, we cannot conclude that only one of these hypotheses is correct.

Interpretations and conclusions

Hypotheses and counter-hypotheses legitimately come from social scientific as well as common-sense theories. One task of social science is to help distinguish between common-sense social theories that are myths and those that are supported by systematic evidence under explicitly recognized conditions in specified periods. Table 5 summarizes our findings.

We found evidence for a few conclusions. (H1) The papers differed widely in how prominently they covered Clinton at different stages of his first term. In general, each newspaper devoted a different share of Clinton stories to each time period and to each issue area. (H2) A few "stock phrases" are used repeatedly to frame political actors and policies even though the newspapers were treating different periods and different issues. (H8) Whichever way we sorted stories (by periods/issues, newspapers, newspapers by region, or newspapers by reputed political ideology), we found that fewer than 20 frames accounted for more than 70 percent of over 500 stories. A relatively small subset of news frames exist and are used repeatedly to characterize political actors and policies. That inventory represents an ethnographic collection of actually used press frames that offers researchers more than the usual "episodic" and "issue" frames that they endlessly count. Most importantly from a heuristic point of view, we can now concretely specify which stock phrases are used in the most used news frames – at least during one historical episode within one segment of one news medium, that is, among a small sample of high-circulation regional newspapers.

Further study is needed about the framing of competing taken-for-granted realities. Clinton did not turn out to be a one-term president. His administration produced its own competing frames regardless of the widespread use of similar frames by liberal and conservative newspapers. In the boom stock market years of the late 1990s, his administration may have foregrounded its own consistent propaganda frames. Comparative studies of the presidencies of George H.W. Bush and Barack Obama might confirm the existence of a common lexicon of media frames or produce a more nuanced inventory. Media frames are one side of the story; audience reception of frames are the other side. Researchers need to ask: Under what conditions do frames resonate with broadly accepted ideological themes or to what extent?

Hegemony is a two-part notion that (A) ordinary people (without great wealth, power or status) often express beliefs and accept arrangements from fear of force, threats or retaliation, but even more often (B) they accept opinions and arrangements that are objectively not in their own long-term self-interests without any constraint (Gramsci, 1971; Hallin, 1986, 1987). The "common sense" of everyday life consists of background assumptions about what is (for example, what is "natural" or "God given") rather than conscious opinions about what ought to be. In this interpretation, subordinate members of a society routinely accept a hegemonic ideology that is objectively not in their own collective interests but in the interests of a stratum of owners and managers who share a separate set of class interests.

Table 5. Hypotheses about Framing President Clinton

H1	Newspapers differ in the number of stories published in the time periods and on the issues.	Confirmed
H2	A sub-set of relatively few frames are used in all stories.	Confirmed
H3	The most frequently used subset of frames overlap periods and issues.	Confirmed
H4	The most frequently used subset of frames among conservative newspapers differ from the subset of frames most frequently used by liberal papers, suggesting the importance of political party ideology.	Not supported
H5	The most frequently used subset of frames vary from newspaper to newspaper, suggesting the importance of organizational culture.	Inconclusive
H6	A subset of often-used frames are shared by all newspapers, suggesting the importance of either an industry-wide professional ideology (of journalists) or a class-wide upper class ideology (of newspaper owners).	Inconclusive
H7	Among H7, H8 and H9, only one hypothesis is correct.	Inconclusive
H8	A relatively small, finite number of frames adequately describe the "angle" or news point of stories, regardless of newspaper, region, reputed political ideology of the newspaper.	Confirmed

The tautological nature of belief systems at the individual level has been conceptualized variously in terms of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, Riecken, and Schacter, 1956), social equilibrium (Heider, 1936) and "etcetera" conversational gambits (Garfinkel,

1967). News consumers reading the same discourse, often came away with opposing interpretations about the meaning of the events described. Based on opinion polls and the election results, a large proportion of the public changed its opinion about Clinton between 1992 and 1994 and then seemed to change again between 1994 and 1996. The media may have used similar media frames throughout his first term, but as economic conditions improved increasingly after the 1991 recession, public receptivity to the frames may have changed.

Clinton was consistently portrayed using a limited number of frames across both domestic and foreign policy issues occurring over a two-year period that even pre-dated his taking office. This paper identifies the frames and provides preliminary evidence of industry-wide, taken-for-granted frames of reference used by news workers over time and in a range of newsroom settings to characterize political actors.

The objective of our study was to identify and collect a lexicon of cognitive frames in one historical and political context as a necessary preliminary step to comparing and mapping frames. If framing analysis has heuristic value as a method, the theory must be situated in detailed instances with a degree of observational reproducibility. Frame theory suggests that officials, events and policies are socially constructed, that is, they are described in implicitly evaluative, sub-culturally shared terms and standardized phrases. Our task was two-fold: to find those situated and specific stock phrases and to examine how widely frame phrases were shared among different media over different periods and different issues.

We demonstrated that the Clinton administration was framed in specific periods and on specific issues in high-visibility stories published by a few large-circulation newspapers that differed in ownership and regional readership.

We have to leave to others many of the social scientific tasks ahead as we see them. Researchers need to map different media outlets, social classes, political parties and ideological factions and in various historic periods, regions and countries. As we see it, the task ahead is similar to what happened in diverse scientific disciplines like geography, chemistry and biology, where paradigmatic theories suggested the importance of a world-wide collection of nautical charts, the periodic table of elements, and an inventory of DNA components.

We see the need for social scientists to examine subaltern points of view that may be marginal within the commercial media but that may have currency in the wider public. Conversation analysts, media scholars and cognitive scientists should study whether upper class ownership groups share a common point of view and to what extent they universalize and embed class-based frames in media content. Frames are subtle techniques of ideological management usually below the level of conscious awareness, whereas political ideology is more or less conscious and manifest in a set of proselytizing beliefs. More importantly, sub-cultures always have a latent deep structure of ideology that is routinely taken-for-granted, ignored and embedded in common sense background assumptions. Frame analysts may succeed where public opinion survey researchers have failed by specifying the detailed nature, content and consequences of class ideologies. If the theory of an upper class hegemonic ideology is correct, frame analysis may be able to demonstrate how and which ideas penetrate newsrooms over the entire industry. If, indeed, market-driven journalism has largely replaced the constraints of professional socialization, frame analysts have to show the existence of industry-wide similarities now and in the past.

By uncovering the frames in news discourse and in media commentary, researchers may empower subordinate class and ethnic communities by exposing industry-wide media interpretations that are simultaneously descriptive and evaluative and by tracing their origins to the discourse of corporate upper class coalitions.

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End Notes

[1] Although Andrew Jackson won both the popular vote and the electoral college vote in the 1824 presidential election, electoral rules in effect at the time enabled Congress to elect John Quincy Adams. Jackson was reelected in 1828 and 1832 and served as president from 1829 through 1837 (Remini, 1972).

[2] To construct a strong test that might show the degree to which news frames were diffused, we purposely selected widely scattered, independent regional dailies. Eliminated were the *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *The New York Times,* and the *Washington Post* since they are regarded as national, agenda-setting papers. Finding that an inside-the-beltway rhetoric exists is less interesting than showing how the president might be covered in the country as a whole. Another reason to eliminate papers in New York and Washington is that these cities function as the economic and political capitals of the country, whereas we sought to discover whether common news frames might exist despite the widest possible regional diversity.

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