

## **J395: Framing Public Issues**

Spring 2016 #08053 Wed. 12:00 to 3:00, CMA 6.146

Instructor: Stephen D. Reese

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### **Course Objectives**

- To introduce the framing perspective and related research
- To provide opportunity for critical synthesis of this area of the field
- To carry out original research within the framing paradigm
- To investigate the application of framing perspectives to big data

The concept of framing has become increasingly attractive in media research, becoming one of the most prominent areas of communication research. Framing refers to the way events and issues are organized, and made sense of, especially by media, media professionals, and their audiences. Frames are organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world. This research moves analysis beyond simple discussions of media “bias” to consider the deeper structure within, in particular, news messages. And it makes connections between visual and verbal analysis, quantitative and qualitative, critical and social scientific, psychological and sociological, production and reception. Under this approach, issues are not unproblematic; labeling, classifying, and reducing them to a simple theme is not the straightforward task performed elsewhere. We will review the range of research as captured in the edited volumes designated as texts below, along with a representative selection from other sources.

We will consider possibilities for both group and individual seminar research projects related to framing and consider how press coverage of a number of important issues may be pursued in a way intended to generate original empirical research. As a result the readings will be front-loaded in the term so as to prepare as quickly as possible for your own projects. This course is intended for students who already have some familiarity with mass communication theory and methods, although the seminar is available to other advanced students outside the School of Journalism. As a new addition to the seminar, we will explore the application of framing perspectives to big data techniques. This may help provide some empirical project possibilities for interested students.

**Texts** (Note: unless otherwise noted, readings refer to chapter in *Framing Public Life*. All instructor works also available on instructor’s website above.)

Stephen Reese, Oscar Gandy, and August Grant (eds.). *Framing Public Life: Perspectives on Media and our Understanding of the Social World*. (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2001). Available in paper.

Paul D'Angelo & Jim Kuypers (eds.). *Doing news framing analysis: Empirical and theoretical perspectives*. (New York: Routledge, 2010). Available in paper.

### **Other Required Readings (See Canvas)**

Benford, R. & Snow, D. (2000). "Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *American Review of Sociology*, 26:611-39.

Benkler, Y., Roberts, H., Solow-Niederman, A. (2013). Social mobilization and the networked public sphere: Mapping the SOPA-PIPA debate. Research Report, Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard.

Bennett, W. L., Lawrence, R., & Livingston, S. (2006). None dare call it torture: Indexing and the limits of press independence in the Abu Ghraib scandal. *Journal of communication*, 56(3), 467-485.

Carragee, K., & Roefs, W. (2004). The neglect of power in recent framing research. *Journal of Communication*, 54(2), 214-233.

D'Angelo, P. (2002). News framing as a multiparadigmatic research program: A response to Entman. *Journal of Communication*, 52(4), 870-888.

Edy, J. a., & Meirick, P. C. (2007). Wanted, Dead or Alive: Media Frames, Frame Adoption, and Support for the War in Afghanistan. *Journal of communication*, 57(1), 119-141.

Entman, R. (1993). Framing: toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58.

Entman, R. & Rojecki, A. (1993). Freezing out the public: Elite and media framing of the U.S. anti-nuclear movement. *Political Communication*, 10(2), 151-167.

Entman, R. M. (2003). Cascading activation: Contesting the White House's frame after 9/11. *Political communication*, 20(4), 415-432.

Gamson, W. & Modigliani, A. (1989). Media discourse and public opinion on nuclear power: A constructionist approach. *American Journal of Sociology*, 95:1: 1-37.

Iorio, S. & Huxman, S. (1996). Media coverage of political issues and the framing of personal concerns. *Journal of communication*. 46(4): 97-115.

Kluver, R., Campbell, H., & Balfour, S. (2013). Language and the boundaries of research: Media monitoring technologies in international media research. *Journal of Broadcasting & electronic media*, 57:1, 4-19.

Matthes, J. (2009). What's in a frame? A content analysis of media framing studies in the world's leading communication journals, 1990-2005. *Journalism & mass communication quarterly*, 86:2, 349-367.

- McLeod, J. & Pan, Z. (2005). Concept explication and theory construction. In Dunwoody, S., Becker, L, McLeod, D., & Kosicki, G. (eds.) *The evolution of key mass communication concepts: Honoring Jack McLeod*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Meyers, T., Nisbet, M., Maibach, E., & Leiserowitz, A. (2012). A public health frame arouses hopeful emotions about climate change: Letter. *Climatic Change*.
- Pan, Z., & Kosicki, G. (1993). Framing analysis: An approach to news discourse. *Political Communication*, 10, 55-75.
- Reese, S. (2004). "Militarized journalism: Framing dissent in the Persian Gulf wars," in Stuart Allan and Barbie Zelizer (eds) *Reporting War: Journalism in Wartime* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004). (instructor web site)
- Reese, S. (2007). "The framing project: A bridging model for media research revisited." Forum commentary contribution for *Journal of Communication*, 57. special issue on Framing, Agenda-setting and Priming
- Reese, S. (in press). Foreword. In D'Angelo, P. (ed.) *Doing news framing analysis 2: Empirical and theoretical perspectives*. New York: Routledge.
- Reese, S. D., & Lewis, S. C. (2009). Framing the War on Terror: Internalization of policy by the U.S. press. *Journalism: Theory, Practice, Criticism*.
- Rowling, C. M., Jones, T. M., & Sheets, P. (2011). Some Dared Call It Torture: Cultural Resonance, Abu Ghraib, and a Selectively Echoing Press. *Journal of Communication*, 61(6), 1043–1061.
- Scheufele, B. (2004). Framing-effects approach: A theoretical and methodological critique. *Communications: European Journal of Communications* 29(4), 401-428.
- Scheufele, D. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of communication*. 49(1): 103-122.

**Schedule** (Read and be prepared to discuss each week's readings)

**Jan. 20** Introduction, student biographies and interests, major questions in framing paradigm, academic productivity

*\*\*email before class a single-document combination of 1-page bio, professional and research interests, followed by CV—you can include recent seminar papers in your CV, which helps me see what you've been interested in up to now)*

- Reese (in press) Foreword to D'Angelo's next framing volume
- D'Angelo, "Introduction and Conclusion" to Doing News Framing Analysis (DNFA)

- Matthes, J. (2009) “What’s in a frame”

#### Issues of productivity, tools, and workflows

- “When productivity becomes hyperactivity”  
<https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2014/03/14/cautionary-words-about-academic-productivity-and-problem-hyperactivity-essay>
- “Profhacks academic strategies” (Canvas. Also on my Academia.edu site)  
<https://utexas.academia.edu/stephenreese>

#### **27 No class, instructor out**

#### **Feb. 3 Guest and Synthesis overviews**

- Reese, “Framing public life”
- Reese (2007) “Framing project”
- Gandy, “Framing at the Horizon”
- Entman, “Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm”
- D’Angelo (2002) “News framing as a multiparadigmatic research program”

#### Big data applications (Prof. Dhiraj Murthy, Goldsmiths <http://www.dhirajmurthy.com/about/>)

- Benkler et al. (2013). “Social mobilization and the networked public sphere” (MediaCloud-based)

#### **10 Empirical, content analytic**

- Van Gorp, “Strategies to take subjectivity out...” (DNFA)
- Cooper, “Oppositional framing of bloggers” (DNFA)
- Tankard, “The empirical approach to the study of media framing”
- Miller & Riechert, “The spiral of opportunity and frame resonance”
- Pan & Kosicki (1993), “Framing analysis”
- Bantimaroudis and Ban, “Covering the crisis in Somalia”
- Entman, “Framing media power” (DNFA)

#### **17 Effects and Receiver perspective**

- McCombs & Ghanem, “The convergence of agenda setting and framing”
- Maher, “Framing: An emerging paradigm or a phase of agenda setting?”
- Scheufele, D. (1999) “Framing as a theory of media effects”
- Scheufele & Scheufele, “Of spreading activation” (DNFA)
- Brewer & Gross, “Studying the effects...” (DNFA)

#### **24 Effects, and Receiver perspective, cont.**

- Shah et al. “Specificity, complexity, and validity” (DNFA)

- DeVreese, “Framing the economy” (DNFA)
- Coleman, “Framing the pictures in our heads” (DNFA)
- Shah, Domke & Wackman, “The effects of value-framing on political judgment and reasoning”
- Iorio & Huxman (1996), “Media coverage of political issues and the framing of personal concerns”

## **2 Political communication: Covering the GWOT**

- Lawrence, “Researching political news framing” (DNFA)
- Entman (2003), “Cascading activation”
- Edy & Meirick (2007), “Wanted, Dead or Alive”
- Bennet et al. (2006), “None dared call it torture”
- Rowling et al. (2011), “Some dared call it torture”

## **9 Sociological: Social movements and deliberative arenas**

- Hertog & McLeod, “A multiperspectival approach to framing analysis”
- Pan & Kosicki, “Framing as a strategic action in public deliberation”
- Entman & Rojecki (1993), “Freezing out the public”
- Benford & Snow (2000), Framing processes and social movements
- Gamson & Modigliani (1989), Media discourse and public opinion

## **16 No class. Spring Break**

## **23 Critical and public policy**

- Carragee & Roefs “Neglect of power”
- Reese, “Militarized journalism”
- (also see Reese & Buckalew, 1995)
- Reese, “Finding frames in a web of culture” (DNFA)
- Reese & Lewis, “Framing the War on Terror”
- Nisbet, “Knowledge into action” (DNFA) <http://climateshiftproject.org/about/>
- Meyers, et al. (2012), “Public health frame”

## **30 Thinking conceptually**

*\*\*Concept explication due*

- McLeod & Pan, “Concept explication and theory construction”

## **6 Review of recent literature (class member led)**

## **13 Review of recent literature (class member led)**

*\*\*preliminary research paper proposal due*

**20**            **Review of recent literature (class member led)**

**27**            **Individual paper presentations**

**4**             **Individual paper presentations**

*\*\*Final papers due, Friday, May 6*

## **Grading**

The bulk of your performance will be based on your ability to contribute to and finish an original research project, suitable for conference presentation and/or publication. This obviously will depend on your ability to learn the relevant literature, synthesize those aspects relevant to your research, pose appropriate research questions and hypotheses, identify appropriate methods and materials for analysis, and writing up the results. Regular attendance is assumed, of course. The following tasks will be scheduled:

**Discussion leading (10%):** prepare handout for class based on class readings for a given day as assigned that helps identify key issues in theory and method and help lead discussion on those readings.

**Concept explication (5%):** Identify a key concept, other than “framing” (approved in advance by instructor) and provide a two-page explication, as discussed in McLeod & Pan (2005, p. 27): identify concept, search literature, examine empirical properties, develop conceptual definition, define it operationally. This will be good preparation for the research critique and final paper.

**Research critique presented in class (20%):** Identify key research article relevant to project for critique and presentation in class (2 page write-up; make handouts to distribute in class). Discuss its relevance, theory, method, strengths and weaknesses, assumptions, etc. These articles will presumably be helpful in updating our class readings and adding to the class bibliography. Be sure to provide full citation and PDF file to the instructor by Monday of the week in question to distribute to the class.

**Research proposal (15%):** Prepare 5 to 7 page double-spaced paper that identifies a key framing issue, reviews relevant literature, suggests appropriate data and ways to access them, and suggest analytic approaches for coding, categorization, etc. Include your bibliography.

**Final paper (50%):** Refine literature review, questions, analysis, and discussion for final research article based on project. Paper will be 15 to 20 pages (double-spaced, 1-inch margins, including references), have the usual sections and follow the norms of a research presentation in the field, suitable for submission to ICA or related conference. This may be collaborative with approval by the instructor.

See instructor's "Research paper organization guide" for elements to include:  
[https://www.academia.edu/1746961/Research\\_paper\\_organization\\_guide](https://www.academia.edu/1746961/Research_paper_organization_guide)

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**The Successful Academic: People who get things done and accomplish their goals often share these traits:**

- Resilience: The ability to recover from setbacks and cope effectively with stress
- Grit: Perseverance and passion for challenging long-term goals
- Conscientiousness: A tendency to be orderly, self-controlled, industrious, responsible, and willing to delay gratification
- Creativity: The willingness to break with convention, challenge the status quo, and come up with new ideas
- Focus: The ability to zero in on one thing at a time, tune out distractions, and avoid multitasking
- Self regulation: An awareness of what matters and the discipline to avoid temptations and see a task through

Katherine Mangan (Aug. 5, 2012). Traits of the 'Get It Done' Personality: Laser Focus, Resilience, and True Grit, *Chronicle of higher education*.