

## **J395: Framing Public Issues**

Spring 2012 #07740 Wed. 9:00 to 12:00 CMA3.108

Instructor: Stephen Reese, Journalism

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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

Within the last several years, the concept of framing has become increasingly attractive in media 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 text 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.

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

- Benford, R. & Snow, D. (2000). "Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *American Review of Sociology*, 26:611-39.
- 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.
- 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. (1993). Framing: toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58.
- Iorio, S. & Huxman, S. (1996). Media coverage of political issues and the framing of personal concerns. *Journal of communication*. 46(4): 97-115.
- Pan, Z., & Kosicki, G. (1993). Framing analysis: An approach to news discourse. *Political Communication*, 10, 55-75.
- 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. (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)
- 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.
- Snow, D. & Benford, R. (1988). Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization. *International social movement research*, 1, 197-217.
- Zhou, Y. & Moy, P. (2007). "Parsing framing processes: The interplay between online public opinion and media coverage." *Journal of Communication*, 57: 79-98.

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

**Jan. 18** Introduction, student biographies and interests, major questions in framing paradigm

D'Angelo, "Introduction and Conclusion" to Doing News Framing Analysis (DNFA)

**25** synthesis overview

- 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"

**Feb. 1** 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)

**Feb. 8** Effects and Receiver perspective

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

**15** 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"

**22** Interpretive, sociological and political communication

Prof. Regina Lawrence, guest

- Lawrence, “Researching political news framing” (DNFA)
- Hertog & McLeod, “A multiperspectival approach to framing analysis”
- Entman & Rojecki (1993), “Freezing out the public”
- Snow & Benford (1988) “Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization”
- Benford & Snow (2000), Framing processes and social movements

**29 (cont.)**

- Pan & Kosicki, “Framing as a strategic action in public deliberation”
- Messaris & Abraham, “Role of images in framing news stories”
- Patterson, “The transference of frames in global television”
- Durham, “Breaking powerful boundaries”

**March 7 Critical (public arena work)**

- Reese, “Finding frames in a web of culture” (DNFA)
- Reese, “Militarized journalism”
- (also see if interested Reese & Buckalew, 1995)
- Carragee & Roefs “Neglect of power”
- Nisbet, “Knowledge into action” (DNFA)

**17 No class. Spring Break**

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

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

\*\*\*(preliminary proposal due—see below), Friday, March 30

**April 4 Review of recent literature (class member led)**

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

**18 open for consultation and review**

**25 Individual paper presentations**

**May 2 Individual paper presentations**

**\*\*\*Final papers due, Friday, May 4**

## **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. Depending

on class interests there may be a collaborative project that you can connect your work to. 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 (15%):** prepare handout for class based on class readings for a given day that helps identify key issues in theory and method and help lead discussion on those readings.

**Research critique presented in class (20%):** Identify key research article relevant to project for critique and presentation in class (2 page write-up, with one page handout). 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, hard copy and pdf file if possible to the instructor by Monday of the week in question to distribute to the class.

**Preliminary 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 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. Further details and guidelines to be reviewed in class.