29 Political Consequences of Framing Issues

The Metaphor Extension Hypothesis: Support across Five Presidential Administrations, **JEFFERY SCOTT MIO** (Psychology and Sociology Department, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Pomona, CA; jsmio@cpp.edu).

In September of 1986, President Corazon Aquino delivered a speech to a joint session of Congress. By all accounts, this speech was highly effective in requesting support for the Philippines in the aftermath of ousted President Ferdinand Marcos’ gutting of the country’s treasury. As President Aquino was leaving the chamber, then Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole said, “Cory, you hit a home run.” President Aquino responded, “I hope the bases were loaded!” President Aquino’s response is what we have termed a “metaphor extension” and we have hypothesized that metaphor extensions are more effective persuasive devices than literal expressions or competing metaphors.

This presentation will present data from our studies over the years supporting the metaphor extension hypothesis, from studies performed during the George H. W. Bush Administration through the present Donald J. Trump Administration. The data—sometimes strong and sometimes less strong—support the basic premise that metaphors that extend an opponent’s metaphor are seen as more persuasive than metaphors that do not extend the opponent’s metaphor or literal responses. By and large, nonpoliticians do not seem to respond in this manner, responding in a literal fashion. However, when they do respond with a metaphor, it is more likely to be with an extending metaphor as opposed to an alternative metaphor.

Applying a Follower-Centric Approach to the 2016 US Presidential Campaign: Candidate Rhetoric and Follower Attributions of Charisma, **MICHELLE C. BLIGH**, (Dean, School of Social Science, Policy, and Evaluation, Claremont Graduate University, 201 Academic Computing Building, 123 East Eighth Street, Claremont, CA 91711; Michelle.bligh@cgu.edu).

The 2016 US Presidential Campaign was followed worldwide due to the dynamic nature of the candidates and the controversy surrounding them. This study takes a unique look at the candidacy of Donald Trump through the eyes of his followers. Using both qualitative data collected from campaign speeches, and quantitative data collected from followers, our study examines (1) the positive/negative valence of the rhetoric used by both presidential candidates, and (2) the relationship between follower characteristics, perceived threat of social groups, and attributions of charisma and effectiveness to Donald Trump. The results of this study suggest that Trump’s rhetoric was significantly more negative, hostile, and aggressive than Clinton’s. In addition, quantitative analyses show a direct relationship between followers’ attitudes toward gender and attributions of charisma and effectiveness to Trump. Finally, followers’ perceived threat of social groups mediated relationships between follower self-esteem, romance of leadership, gender attitudes, and attributions of charisma and effectiveness to Trump. Our results shed further light on the important role that follower characteristics play in predicting social constructions of leadership and attributions of charisma. Implications for both organizations and scholars of leadership are discussed.

Social Identity Framing: A Strategy of Social Influence for Social Change, **VIVIANE SEYRANIAN** (Department of Psychology and Sociology, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, 3801 W. Temple Avenue, Pomona, CA 91768, vseyranian@cpp.edu).

Social Identity Framing theory (Seyranian, 2013; 2014, 2017; Seyranian & Bligh, 2008) underscores the key idea that shaping social identity through specific communication tactics can be an important component of the change process. Whenever change is necessary, this theory may provide important insights into factors that advance success for leaders and organizations. This talk will discuss empirical evidence on social identity framing. In promoting support for renewable energy policies, research shows that using language that implicates social identity may help leaders to convince their followers to embrace change. Field research that tests the influence of social identity framing tactics on residential water consumption confirms that social identity framing is more effective than providing information alone and just as effective as time consuming and expensive feedback procedures in curbing superficial water use. Finally, computerized content analysis of Trump and Clinton’s speeches during the 2018 presidential election reveals that social identity framing tactics were employed to a greater extent by Trump than Clinton. Implications of this program of research on social identity framing are discussed.

Rhetoric’s Influence on Leadership during a Time of Uncertainty, **NICOLE DUONG**1** and **VIVIANE SEYRANIAN2** (1Division of Behavioral and Organizational Sciences, Claremont Graduate University, 123 E. 8th Street, Claremont, CA 91711, nicole.duong@cgu.edu; 2Department of Psychology and Sociology, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, 3801 W. Temple Avenue, Pomona, CA 91768, vseyranian@cpp.edu).

This contribution builds upon social identity framing theory, which suggests that leaders employ specific communication styles to strategically frame “who we are” (social identity) and distinguish their group (ingroup) from other groups (outgroup). This work examines the influence of rhetoric (i.e., ingroup and outgroup language) on leadership perceptions in the context of
a crisis—in this case, before and after the 2016 terrorist attacks in Brussels, Belgium. Based on a 2x2 between subjects experiment, 694 participants were randomly assigned to read one of four speeches ostensibly delivered by a U.S. senator. All speeches were identical except for variation in language type (ingroup or outgroup) and presence of crisis (pre- or post-Belgium terrorist attacks). After reading the speech, participants completed measures of leadership perceptions and emotions elicited by the leader’s message along with demographic characteristics. Preliminary findings suggest that before the attacks, leaders who employed outgroup language (M = 5.19, SD = 1.34) were significantly more effective than leaders who used ingroup language (M = 4.64, SD = 1.53), F(1, 399) = 14.44, p < .0001, η² = 0.04. After the attacks, leaders who employed outgroup language (M = 4.59, SD = 1.36) were no longer perceived as significantly more effective than leaders who used ingroup language (M = 4.75, SD = 1.48), F(1, 290) = .90, p = .343, η² = 0.01., suggesting that talking about “who they are” is associated with more effective leadership before a crisis, but not after. Findings and implications for leadership communication will be discussed.