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Talking Us Into War: Problem Definition By Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and George W. Bush

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TALKING US INTO WAR:
PROBLEM DEFINITION
BY PRESIDENTS LYNDON B. JOHNSON AND GEORGE W. BUSH

TALKING US INTO WAR:
PROBLEM DEFINITION
BY PRESIDENTS LYNDON B. JOHNSON AND GEORGE W. BUSH

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy

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ABSTRACT

How presidents talk us into war merges the study of problem definition in public policy with the study of rhetoric in communications. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, this research analyzes the key words used by two presidents, Lyndon B. Johnson and George W. Bush, to persuade us into escalating a war in Vietnam and engaging in a pre-emptive war in Iraq, respectively. The findings indicate that presidents repeat words that are patriotic, emotive, metaphorical, symbolic and religious, tapping into American themes of Manifest Destiny and even predicting dire outcomes if we do not accept their definitions of the dangers and rewards involved in going to war. The study also finds that presidents develop a sustaining narrative that highlights what problem definition literature calls a “causal story,” which identifies the harm done, describes its cause, assigns moral blame and claims government is responsible for the remedy (Stone 1989). This research indicates that Johnson used far less antithetical, religious and repetitive language than did Bush, in some cases strikingly so.

This work relies upon the literature on problem definition, presidential rhetoric and presidential leadership as a backdrop for studying the major speeches of these two presidents prior to their escalation or initiation of war. It employs content analysis using the computerized program, NVivo 7. The study concludes that while we may not be able to measure the degree to which various audiences are persuaded by presidential rhetoric, we can see that presidents, who wield the powerful bully pulpit, carefully choose their words and repeat them often to afford themselves maximum persuadability with their audiences as they try to talk us into war. Such language also appears designed to quell dissent and to enlarge the authority of the president.

This dissertation is approved for
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father, Albert May, and to my mother, Evelyn Crawford May, neither of whom, to my great regret, lived to see this or other accomplishments, but who are the reason for all I do.

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

“Policies and words are inextricably linked –
the former cannot be conjured in the absence of the latter.”
Robert Schlesinger, *White House Ghosts: Presidents and Their Speechwriters*

On April 7, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson gave his famous “Peace Without Conquest” speech at Johns Hopkins University, his first consummate speech laying out his rationale for why the United States was at war with Vietnam and why he thought this war that he had inherited was worth continuing. On March 5, 1965, Johnson had given orders to commence Operation Rolling Thunder, a sustained bombing raid on Vietnam, which escalated the war (Battlefield Timeline, PBS).¹

On September 11, 2001, terrorist-controlled planes demolished the World Trade Center in New York, damaged the Pentagon and crashed in a field southeast of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On March 19, 2003 (American time), President George W. Bush began a concerted attack on Iraq called Operation Iraqi Freedom (September 11: Chronology of Terror, CNN; The Invasion of Iraq, Frontline).

Both presidents waged different wars. Johnson’s war was a continuation of a gradual involvement and was called a “conflict,” as the U.S. never made a formal

¹ Through its Gulf of Tonkin Resolution on August 7, 1964, Congress had already given Johnson broad war powers to deal with North Vietnamese attacks on U.S. forces, following a purported attack by North Vietnamese torpedo boats on two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin, off the coast of Vietnam, on August 2, 1964. That resolution gave Johnson broad war powers to deal with North Vietnamese attacks on U.S. forces.

declaration of war against Vietnam (Reitano 2004, 29).² Bush's war was a pre-emptive effort that was actually declared a "war."

Both presidents used pre-war/escalation rhetoric to garner support for their wars/conflicts. They used patriotic language, religious language, metaphors, symbols, manifest destiny language and antithetical language that drew stark delineations between good and evil.

Importance of Presidential Rhetoric

Presidents must rally popular and political support for their wars and conflicts because these events often require great expenditures of the nation's resources, as well as the service and lives of its citizens and often that of other countries. War creates added economic costs, shifts in policy concentrations, heightened public scrutiny and global concern.

One way presidents rally support for their wars is through their speeches, which they use to define problems and offer solutions. When they define problems, they put them on the systemic and institutional agendas. Cobb and Elder define the systemic agenda as "all issues that are commonly perceived by members of the political community as meriting public attention and as involving matters within the jurisdiction of existing governmental authority" (1983, 85). They define the institutional agenda as "that set of items explicitly up for active and serious consideration of authoritative decision-makers" (1983, 86).

² Nicholas de B. Katzenbach, Johnson's Under Secretary of State, called the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution "the functional equivalent of a declaration of war," according to Reitano (2004).

As Hart, a scholar of the American presidency, explains, “public speech no longer attends the processes of governance – it *is* governance” (Hart 1987, 14). Hart (1987) calls presidential speech “speech for the record, speech that cannot fade, speech whose echo will never cease” (6).³ And he notes that “if rhetoric really is governance, then a great deal of rhetoric must translate into a great deal of governance” (18).

This dissertation compares the pre-war-escalation and the pre-war rhetoric of Johnson and Bush, respectively, to examine how these presidents defined the problem that allowed them to rally support for committing the nation to war or escalating an ongoing war.

The Power of Presidential Rhetoric

Rhetoric has as its basic function “the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents ... The most characteristic concern of rhetoric [is] the manipulation of men’s beliefs for political ends” (Burke 1950, 41).

Rhetoric is both a human activity and the “science” of understanding that activity (Knoblauch 1985).

Rhetoric is also a policy tool, an instrument “through which governments seek to influence behavior and influence policy purposes” (Schneider and Ingram 1990, 511). If “public policy almost always attempts to get people to do things they otherwise would not have done, or it enables them to do things they might not have done otherwise (Schneider and Ingram 1990, 510), then Schneider and Ingram posit that “individuals are more likely to take actions in support of policy goals if the goals or actions are (1)

³ One might also speculate that the enduring impact of rhetoric is dependent on the perceived legitimacy and efficacy of the speechmaker, although this work does not delve into that area.

promoted by government officials as important, high priority issues, (2) consistent with their values, beliefs, and preferences, [and] (3) associated with positive symbols, labels, images, and events” (1990, 519-20). Schneider and Ingram say symbolic and hortatory tools are one way government accomplishes this.

Given this context, the uncertainty and impact of war, and the great trust citizens and elites give to presidential knowledge of foreign matters, presidential war rhetoric is likely to play an important role in whether or not citizens accept presidential arguments for war. After all, as some scholars point out, political rhetoric in a representative democracy is the best source of information for evaluation of policy (Lippman 1922; Mutz 1993; Page 1996). So important is rhetoric that Robertson (1976) says it is one of two points at which representative government can fail, the other being the decisions made by the public.

Research Questions

This dissertation seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1) How did these presidents use rhetoric to try to talk us into war?
- 2) How were their addresses similar and different in terms of the words and emphases they used?
- 3) How did they frame their causal stories in terms of who (or what) was to blame for the circumstances or events precipitating the war/conflict?

In addition to these research questions, I speculate as to why presidents might use these definitions, as well as these portrayals or representations of the problem, and why their approaches might have been different.

Importance of the Research

Presidents have tremendous rhetorical power to characterize problems and justify action, based upon their definitions and interpretations. They are, in a sense, problem-definers-in-chief who can influence policy through their bully pulpits. Moreover, Hart (1984) points out that “citizens ... are increasingly using rhetorical criteria when evaluating the merits of their chief executives” (4), including how they frame their arguments.

Words are important drivers of action, especially when employed by elites such as presidents. Moreover, how presidents use similar or different themes and rhetorical devices in their speeches to justify war reveals what they think is persuasive to both domestic and international audiences in the context of their times. It is also revelatory of their leadership styles, personality and worldview (Barber 1972). Therefore, the study of pre-war presidential rhetoric reveals a great deal about how leaders read their audiences and determine the best way to explain, legitimize and maintain support for perhaps the most important action a government can take – waging war.

As Jerit (2002) puts it, “to the extent that we are interested in how citizens ... make decisions on important political issues, we must be concerned with the nature and dynamics of political rhetoric surrounding those issues” (2).

This research is important for a number of reasons. First, it begins to address a gap in the problem definition literature and in the study of public policy itself by embracing a relatively new discipline in this area: communication of public policy. While public policy studies have included such disciplines as agriculture, criminal justice, economics, education and sociology, they have yet to fully incorporate communication

studies. Nor have communications studies incorporated problem definition in the sense that it is defined in public policy. Thus, this study expands our understanding of problem definition (and, for that matter, agenda setting) in the policy-making process and broadens it to include other disciplines that can further inform it, while also further informing those other disciplines.

Second, war is not an easy sell. It is the most awesome undertaking a president can ask of his citizenry because it involves potential loss of life, endangerment of the country, relations with other countries and large budgetary expenditures. Therefore, the reasons for it must be carefully communicated, explained and justified for it to be accepted, not only by average citizens, but by elites, the media and allies. Presidents are the key players in making the case for war because they are the commanders-in-chief (and, I would argue, definers-in-chief). In addition, typically we place high trust in them in matters of foreign policy and crisis management. One of the key ways presidents exercise influence is through their public addresses, which also provide insight into their policy leadership.

Third, this research is important because how presidents rhetorically define the cause of problems and offer solutions often directs the formation, implementation and evaluation of that policy. Thus, this research advances knowledge of the crucial role of rhetoric in legitimizing public policy, or creating the perception of legitimacy, especially as it relates to presidents and war.

Fourth, this research breaks new ground in showing how presidents may include religious rhetoric to define the need for war. Not only is this area of research new to

public policy, but even academic historians of American foreign relations largely have overlooked religion.⁴

In particular, understanding why Johnson talked so little about the war and talked around it is perhaps illustrative of reluctance to wage war. Similarly, understanding how Bush used speech to justify a pre-emptive war is illustrative of how presidents overcome objections to policy and enhance their authority.

Despite the fact that presidential speeches primarily are written by staff, this work treats speeches as if the two presidents were the authors themselves because presidents must approve and take responsibility for what they say publicly (and sometimes non-publicly).⁵ Moreover, citizens treat such speech as if presidents were the authors. Therefore, this study focuses on words, including arguments and themes, rather than historical or political analyses, to understand the promotion of war.

This topic is timely, given the sagging popularity and human and economic costs of the ongoing war in Iraq, the associated terrorist attacks and the connections some have made between the Vietnam War and the Iraq War. It relates to a wide population in that war calls upon all citizens to sacrifice in various ways, whether through military service, financial support or emotional/physical support of those returning from war. This study also highlights an influential population in that, without citizen support, a government cannot successfully pursue a policy on a long-term basis.

⁴ Preston (2006) has done a comprehensive paper on the understudied importance of religion in this area.

⁵ As Hinckley points out, “we are not studying speechwriters rather than presidents “if there are important similarities across presidents ... If the same picture is presented across presidents, the institution is carrying on specific components ... It does not matter which ... speechwriters suggested the phrase” (1990, 17).

Research Plan

In order to answer the research questions posed here, the applicable literature is reviewed in Chapter 2. This work draws from numerous areas of literature, among them communications (including political and presidential rhetoric), public policy (including problem definition, leadership and policy typologies), the presidency, and the presidency and religion.

Although scholars have done extensive research in these areas of literature separately, few have examined their intersection, especially in the context of presidential pre-war-escalation and pre-war rhetoric. This study recognizes that policies provide communication vehicles and that communication is useful for promoting policies, especially when done by presidents. Thus, it is hoped that this study broaches a new frontier by drawing from different disciplinary areas, thus pushing the boundaries of public policy study to be more inter-disciplinary.

Chapter 3 discusses the methods for analyzing the data, which consist of selected pre-war-escalation speeches by Johnson and pre-war speeches by Bush. These speeches are content analyzed using a software program called NVivo, Version 7, which allows the researcher to categorize the various words and emphases used by the two presidents and summarize their compared usage. Chapter 4 presents a summary of the findings on secular language, and Chapter 5 summarizes the findings on inherently religious language. Both chapters point to the use of antithetical speech, causal stories and metaphorical/symbolic speech by presidents, and compare how the two presidents differed in their use of these. Chapter 6 features a summary and discussion of the findings, speculates as to their implications, discusses the limitations of the research and

suggests other potential areas of research. Throughout this work, there is an emphasis on the varying degrees to which these presidents rhetorically drew stark contrasts, or even painted black and white pictures, of the enemy, America, the coalition of nations involved and the victims. There is also an examination of the degree to which these presidents drew upon religious context to define the problem and to advocate the continuation of war, or the initiation of war, as the only possible solution to the problem. This study also shows the varying degrees to which these presidents co-opted the citizenry by defining the job citizens supposedly needed to do to fulfill presidential ambitions for war. Similarly, it looks at the ways in which they co-opted allies to gain their support. This study opens up many new areas of research, including how presidents rhetorically define problems by predicting what will happen if their suggested course of action is not taken.

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review seemingly disparate literatures that pertain to presidential war rhetoric in the areas of problem definition, policy typologies, political rhetoric and policy leadership, and to focus on the features in each area of literature that help answer my research questions.

The study of problem definition through presidential rhetoric has the potential to weave all these different literatures together in a way that is often not done in policy literature. It is important to merge the study of these areas because rhetoric is one of the primary ways (if not *the* primary way) that leaders define problems, advocate and create policy “solutions” and define their leadership (and in turn are defined by it). Certainly, rhetoric is more or less important in different policy areas, and certainly no amount of rhetoric can create success out of a bad policy choice. But not only is it clear presidents cannot lead without speaking, when it comes to their promotion of war as a policy solution, they *must* use effective rhetoric to help gain citizen, elite and world support. Rhetoric cannot guarantee them a successful war policy, but it might help obscure (if even temporarily) the failure of that policy.

This chapter is organized around the following major headings: Presidential Rhetoric (including Problem Definition in Presidential Rhetoric), Policy Typologies, The Nature of Political Rhetoric, Presidential Rhetoric as a Policy Tool, The Rhetorical Presidency (including Foreign Crisis Rhetoric, Antithetical Appeals, Use of Symbols,

Use of Frames and Religious Rhetoric; Moral Leadership), Presidential Policy Leadership Through Rhetoric and Conclusion.

Presidential Rhetoric

Political scientists have been slow to study how political rhetoric links political elites and the electorate⁶ (Jerit 2002, 1). And yet, as Beck notes, “political persuasion is a critical topic in political science” that we are only beginning to study in the laboratory (Beck 1999, 8). In addition, only recently have scholars begun to merge some of the literature on rhetoric, problem definition and leadership, especially as regards presidential speech.

The president is the most prominent person in American politics and as such is constantly commented upon and evaluated by all parts of society. He and his policies receive more press coverage than all other political figures combined (Edwards 2003, 15).

It was Theodore Roosevelt who declared the White House a “bully pulpit.” Presidents employ this pulpit to persuade us to accept their definitions of a problem, including the need to go to war. It is from there that they can command attention from the public, Congress, the media and the world at large through their rhetoric (Edwards 2003, 8). And many of them have been prolific speakers. Presidents use their bully pulpit because they are dependent upon public support to achieve their goals, whether

⁶ Notable exceptions have been Jacobs and Shapiro 2000, and Johnston, Blais, Brady and Crete 1992. Jacobs and Shapiro show how politicians track public opinion to determine how to craft their public statements and actions to win support for their policies. According to Beck, Blais et al. “were able to convincingly demonstrate via survey experiment that the Liberals in Canada had a rhetorical advantage early in the campaign, but that the Conservatives effectively countered this over the course of the campaign” (1999, 8).

from citizens in general or from Congress, (where they face many obstacles and have few assets to persuade) (Edwards, 2003, 14). Thus presidents are engaged in a “permanent campaign” to win support (Edwards 2003, 21). Edwards (2003) says “the president’s goal is to influence which attitudes and information people incorporate into their judgments of his policies and performance” (159). The bully pulpit is a central element of a governing strategy that Kernell (1997) calls “going public” (Edwards 2003, 8), or bypassing Congress by going directly to the people.⁷

Eshbaugh-Soha (2006) argues that presidents are not even trying to rally public support for their policy goals through their speeches, but rather are “signaling” to Congress their policy preferences in an attempt to influence congressional votes. His view is counter to the prevailing model presented by Kernell (1997) that presidents increasingly try to “go public” because they believe this is a better way to influence the public through their speeches.

Thus, it is no surprise that there is a “substantial and rapidly increasing body of literature focusing on presidential rhetoric” and that “underlying most of this research is the premise that the president can employ rhetoric to move the public” (Edwards 2003, 6).

Any study of presidential rhetoric implies that presidents have power to persuade us and therefore to influence public opinion. However, this is not a study of the direct effect of presidential rhetoric on popular opinion because, while it seems unlikely that

⁷ Other elements of a governing strategy, according to Edwards, are party leadership, mobilization of interest groups and exercise of legislative skills (2003,8). Edwards (2003) says presidents persist in going public even though they typically do not succeed in changing public opinion because they usually become presidents by doing so, because not all their efforts are designed to change opinions (there is value in preaching to the converted) and because their real influence may be on elites, the media and Congress (241-246).

presidents would speak so much if they didn't believe it had an effect, charting that exact effect is tricky. Not only are the media often a filter for presidential words (and therefore one must find a way to measure media use and impact of presidential words), but attributing movements of public opinion to presidential rhetoric is difficult. For one thing, there are numerous other factors that affect public opinion so isolating only presidential words is a difficult task. So for this study, it only matters that presidents think rhetoric is important. We must presume that this is so because they speak a lot. Perhaps they also think it is expected of them, so they are afraid not to do it. Thus, this study assumes presidential rhetoric has an effect because it is the main tool employed by presidents in their attempts to move the public.

Even so, Edwards (2003) says that presidents are rarely able to move the public to support their policies (79) and that only a few studies have concluded that presidents can influence public opinion on a small number of issues. However, Edwards (2003) notes that Robert Tucker argues for a "situational charisma," in which a leader of "non-messianic tendency" evokes a charismatic response simply because of being in position in a time of acute distress," citing Roosevelt and Churchill during war times (83).⁸ And he notes that "an individual president may be ineffective and fail to move opinion, but the potential is there" (2003, 6).

Yet Edwards says that "chief executives are not directors who lead the public where it otherwise refuses to go, thus reshaping the contours of the political landscape. Instead, presidents are facilitators who reflect, and may intensify, widely held views. In the process, they may endow the views of their supporters with structure and purpose and

⁸ When it comes to influencing public opinion, Edelman makes the point that it behooves us to examine how political actions get some groups the tangible things they want from government and what these actions mean to the mass public, including how it is placated by them (1977, 12).

exploit opportunities in their environments to accomplish their joint goals” (Edwards 2003, 74). However, the president’s rhetoric [also] could have a disproportionate effect on some constituencies (Edwards 2003, 75).

Jeffrey Cohen, who has done the most work on aggregate opinion, concludes presidents can affect public opinion only modestly, and that they can affect the public agenda over time only on foreign policy (Edwards 2003). Presidential rhetoric on foreign matters is a special case. Edwards says “there is some evidence that people tend to defer more to the president on foreign issues than on domestic problems” because such matters are distant, appear complex and seem to require specialized knowledge. He says people defer to the president more on foreign issues than domestic ones (Edwards 2003, 27).

Ironically, foreign policy rhetoric provides the most conspicuous cases of the executive branch misleading the public or manipulating its policy preferences because of its control over the flow of information (Jerit 2002, 8). Jerit (2002) cites the Gulf of Tonkin incident as an example, saying “the government largely controlled what information reached the public and distorted it in ways that served its policy agenda” (9).

Page and Shapiro agree that political leaders and other elites

“sometimes fail to provide the kind of unbiased, useful political information and interpretations that citizens need and ... sometimes promote misleading, distorted, or outright false understandings of politics” (1999, 113). Downs further points out that elites may provide the public with “correct, but biased, information (1957, 94).

Ben-Porath (2007, 181) supports this view, finding that

in building the case for imminent war, presidents turn to narrative descriptions of specific atrocities, namely rape, torture and victimization of children, [while by] the same token, presidents wishing to avoid American involvement in war use abstract terms and statistical information concerning human rights crises, but refrain from detailing personalized stories of abuse.

Jerit says, “The predominant view is that rhetoric increases or decreases the importance of particular considerations” (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Johnston et al. 1992; Zaller 1992). She says that presidential rhetoric can prime the argument by raising “the priority that individuals assign to certain considerations, thereby influencing which information individuals retrieve from memory and incorporate into their judgments” (2002, 13).

Some scholars refer to rhetoric used to argue a particular worldview as a “narrative.” While a coherent “state-of-war narrative” has been critical in conducting past wars, Callahan, Dubnick and Olshfski say there has been little scholarship on the role of narratives during wartime, with the exception of broad historical anecdotal or atheoretical studies (2006, 554). However, a number of scholars have looked at how different national cultures have examined the memory of past wars (Igarashi 2000, Lundberg 1984, Moeller 1996).⁹

An increasing amount of literature today concentrates on American narratives that try to define enemies and threats. These include focus on the mass media’s role in preparing the nation for war (Doherty 1999), social scientists and others who create stereotypical images of enemy societies and their threats (Robin 2001), and images that pervade American culture and Cold War narratives (Whitfield 1996).

⁹ A time-honored narrative found cross-culturally throughout history is the self-defense narrative, which might suit Bush’s Iraq War. In this narrative, the Hero rescues not only the Victim but Himself. The Protagonist and Hero are primarily the United States (whose point of view is being taken and who is inherently good). The Villain (first al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden, then Saddam Hussein and Iraq) is inherently bad. The Villain commits villainy (9/11, presumed accumulation of nuclear material in which to attack the United States) against the Victim (principally the United States, but also the coalition and the Iraqi people). The Hero role is to rescue the Victim. The Hero undergoes Difficulties (9/11, the seeking out of Bin Laden and later the pre-emptive war). The Hero battles against the Villain. Victory (presumed killing of Bin Laden and conquering of Iraq) is expected. The Villain is presumed to face Punishment (defeat, death). The Hero is presumed to receive a Reward (vindication, victory, glory) (Lakoff 2008, 25).

The social sciences have taken a particular interest in narratives in recent years (see Bal 1997; Chatman 1978, 1990; and Cobley 2001a, 2001b). Other social scientists have used discourse analysis to examine narratives in daily conversation, workplace interactions, doctor-patient interactions and celebrity interviews (Abell and Stokoe 1999; Beech 2000; Boje 1991; Gee 1999; Loewe et al. 1998; Ochs and Capps 2001; Schiffrin, Tannen, and Hamilton 2001; Waitzkin, Britt and Williams 1994; Wajcman and Martin 2002).

Lakoff (2008) has recently delved into the area of the political mind, noting “narratives and frames are not just brain structures with intellectual content, but rather with integrated intellectual-emotional content. Neural binding circuitry provides this integration” (Lakoff 2008, 28). Cognitive science and neuroscience tell us that narratives are fixed in the neural circuits of our brains. We know that they can be activated and function unconsciously, automatically, as a matter of reflex” (34).

Lakoff (2008) says the “lived story” (narrative) is at the center of modern personality theory, or neural computation. He says:

A president may see himself as a Hero rescuing a Victim-nation from a Villain-dictator. Or as leading a Battle of Good Against Evil. The roles in narratives that you understand yourself as fitting give meaning to your life, including the emotional color that is inherent in narrative structures (33).

Lakoff (2008) notes that the “deep Rescue narrative” remains the same in the first Persian Gulf War under Bush I and the second under Bush II. This is possible, he says, because the

the synapses of the neural circuits characterizing [the deep narratives] have been so strengthened that the highly general, deep narratives are permanently parts of our brains. Neural binding allows these permanent general narrative structures to apply to every new special case. That’s why

the same narrative structures keep recurring, from war to war ... from one political figure to the other (38).

In fact, Lakoff (2008) says that “a misleading and destructive idea can be introduced under conditions of trauma and then repeated so often that it is forever in your synapses. It won’t just go away.” He says the only way to “inhibit it” is to “provide alternatives” (125).

Zaller argues that:

the president’s greatest chance of influencing public opinion is in a crisis, which attracts the public’s attention and in which elites articulate a unified message. At other times, most people are too inattentive or too committed to views to be strongly influenced by elite efforts at persuasion (Edwards 2003, 166).

Certainly, attack and war qualify as crises.

Johnson’s and Bush’s narratives have both similarities and differences. Johnson inherited an ongoing conflict with plenty of context. It stemmed out of an international cold war against Communism that dated back to the mid-1940s, involving many countries. It escalated under President Kennedy who in the early 1960s sought to increase U.S. military involvement in South Vietnam through additional machinery and advisers. Johnson used a supposed second attack by North Vietnam on an American ship on August 4, 1964, to secure a congressional Gulf of Tonkin Resolution to give him broad war powers. He used the resolution to launch limited reprisal air attacks, thus escalating U.S. involvement in what would become the Vietnam War (Brigham and Hoffman, retrieved 2007). However, he never formally justified the war publicly until his Johns Hopkins address titled “Peace Without Conquest,” on April 7, 1965, long after his first major “Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress” on November 27, 1963.

Bush used the actual terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 as a pretext for war in Iraq, even though there is dispute as to the link to Iraq. The 9/11 attacks were unique in American history, despite analogies to Pearl Harbor in 1941 and other American wars associated with “triggering events,” because they occurred in a narrative vacuum, unlike other American wars in which context had been “well paved materially, politically, and psychologically over an extended period of time” (Callahan et al. 2006, 554). The event “occurred in a context of public indifference to or ignorance of the threat posed by terrorists.” In addition, Bush declared war “without any troops or plans in place to confront this particular enemy” (Callahan et al. 2006, 555).¹⁰

Presidents must compete in a congested environment to be heard over Congress, the media and many other sources of information. And they must focus public attention on their policies for a sustained period of time, which requires repeated rhetoric (Edwards 2003, 148, 155).

Problem Definition in Presidential Rhetoric

One way politicians justify their focus on an issue and argue for access to the political agenda is by defining it as a problem. How they define the problem has impact on if and how it is addressed.¹¹

Problem definition is the process of characterizing issues in the political arena that are seen as having social significance, meaning, implications and urgency (Rochefort and Cobb 1994). Problem definition is a key element of rhetoric, and vice versa. How a

¹⁰ The authors say “the bombings of the World Trade Center in 1993 and the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995, as well as the mischief of the Unabomber, were perceived as the criminal acts of fringe fanatics who would be brought to justice through normal channels of law and order” (2006, 555).

¹¹ Of course, before presidents influence how the public thinks about a problem they must get them to think about it. However, while agenda setting is important, this study is limited to problem definition.

problem is defined prescribes its politics, its chances of reaching the public agenda, its likelihood of reaching a desired policy outcome and the range of solutions available for solving it. Indeed, Crable and Vibbert (1985) say problems are only identified as such when someone gives voice to them (5). Given the impact of problem definition, scholars increasingly have focused on it in recent times (see Baumgartner and Jones 1993, ch. 2; Cobb and Elder 1983, 172-179; Jones 1994, 24-26, 181-183; Kingdon 1995, ch. 5; Rochefort and Cobb 1994; Stone 1988, Pt. 3).

Most of the literature on problem definition focuses on how it is the impetus for agenda setting. For instance, Kingdon (1995) has studied how problems, including their definition, are one of three “streams” that influence the agenda, the other being proposed solutions and politics, including electoral, partisan, interest group and institutional factors. Kingdon focuses on how to achieve agenda status when one or more streams (usually a problem and political streams) open a window of opportunity that allows policy entrepreneurs to try to link the streams.

Problem definition involves three activities: (1) investigating the nature, extent and probable cause of a condition seen as undesirable; (2) *framing* (italics mine) the condition as a policy problem amenable to public intervention;¹² and (3) specifying relevant goals for evaluating solutions (Weimer, 1993). Problems are defined and redefined as a result of changes in criteria, including core beliefs (Jones 1984, 25, 182–184).

Rochefort and Cobb (1994) have summarized much of the literature on problem definition. They say the function of problem definition in political discourse is “to

¹² Researchers of presidential influence upon public opinion may do well to consider the use of rhetorical framing to fit preferred policy options into public opinion.

explain, to describe, to recommend, and above all, to *persuade* (italics mine)” (15). Rochefort and Cobb (1994) examined various streams of literature in terms of social conflict and politics, social construction of reality, post modernism and policy analysis. Notably, all these approaches emphasize the importance of language to understanding policy making and the social construction of reality. Rochefort and Cobb also emphasize the importance of *referential symbols* (clear tangible or factual basis) and *condensational symbols* (icons or slogans that can represent a wide variety of meaning to different people) (167). In this work, I speculate that Johnson used more referential symbols and Bush more condensational symbols. Rochefort and Cobb also emphasize two schools of thought: instrumental, which is focused on rational problem solving, and expressive, which is seen as a defense of moral values. Again, I would speculate Johnson employs more of the former and Bush more of the latter.

Rochefort and Cobb (1994) and Stone (1989) point out that problem definition is often influenced by the perceived location of the cause and who is seen as to blame (causality). They look at how claims are made, showing how they influence the attention a problem gets, its salience (level of awareness and caring associated with it) and whether or not they influence the problem achieving systemic or institutional agenda status. For instance, they discuss the influence of severity (How serious is the problem?), incidence (How many are affected and for how long?), novelty (Is this a new problem?), proximity (How close to home is it?) and crisis association (Is it perceived as a crisis? Is crisis rhetoric used?)

Stone (1989) argues that the essence of successful problem definition is the causal story, which identifies the harm done, describes its cause, assigns moral blame to

individuals or organizations and claims government is responsible for the remedy. Problem definers, she says, translate “difficult conditions” into problems that are amenable to human action (282). Strategists, she says, define problems to win over the most people and gain the most leverage over their opponents (1988, 106).

Hoekstra (1999) uses Stephen Skowronek’s book, *The Politics Presidents Make* (1993), to highlight the “sustaining narrative” (causal story and problem definition) that a president uses to make his place in history and to maintain leadership authority. That narrative may involve justifying action by laying out a detailed case, as Johnson tended to do. It also may involve staying on a generalized message, as Bush tended to do.

Edelman (1988) says “those who favor a particular course of government action are likely to cast about for a widely feared problem to attach it to in order to maximize its support” (21). As an example of this, some have accused Johnson of using the purported Gulf of Tonkin attack as a reason to escalate the war in Vietnam, while some have accused the Bush administration of having a plan to invade Iraq and using 9/11 as a pretext.

Presidents have tremendous power over problem definition. In Bostdorff’s analysis of six presidents (John Kennedy to George H.W. Bush) and their foreign crisis rhetoric, she found that presidents can “use language to give birth to an issue, to encourage us to believe that no issue exists and to convince us that some issues are more urgent and deserving of our attention than others.” She says presidential rhetors recognize that the way they define an issue “establishes the *stasis*, or central point, on which an issue turns” (1994, 4). Thus, presidents do well to name an issue so that their proposed policy seems to be the best solution. In doing so, they also are more likely to

portray themselves as effective and even as heroes in a battle between good and evil (1994, 6).

Given citizens' tendency to trust the president when the country is threatened from abroad, presidents can "enact policy before announcing the existence of a crisis; the issue definition then serves to rationalize the president's course of action. Because crises imply threat and urgent need for resolution, many citizens enthusiastically jump aboard the president's crisis bandwagon" (Bostdorff 1994, 7).

Bostdorff (1994) says that by defining an issue as a crisis, presidents can focus attention on it, give it urgency and more easily call upon citizen sacrifice and unity, which is especially important pre-war (5) or pre-escalation of a war.

Bostdorff (1994) goes so far as to say presidents actually create and promote crises through their rhetoric because it serves them to do so. She says they

treat the crises like a completely objective, factual state of affairs that has occurred as a result of some other party's actions. A closer look reveals that crises have a different origin. According to Windt, 'Situations do not create crises. Rather the president's perception of the situation and the rhetoric he uses to describe it mark an event as a crisis' (9).

Opposition to the president's definition in such situations is difficult, and opposers must attack the president's definition of the problem before they attack the policy. But "to criticize the commander-in-chief in the midst of an apparent crisis may appear downright unpatriotic. Therefore opponents discover that arguments against the president's assertions quickly garner them opponents of their own" (Bostdorff 1994, 7).

Bostdorff (1994) found that

commanders-in-chief typically emphasize a menacing crisis scene that threatens American lives and American principles, thus dictating that the United States act to achieve both pragmatic (the protection of lives) and

idealistic (the protection of principles) purposes that would serve to rectify, or correct, the crisis scene (206).

She found that presidential

appeals to American ideals also deflected troubling questions about the ethicality of U.S. policy by infusing military intervention with moral [even sacred] purpose. In this way, presidents' situational portrayals served to reinforce the American myths of mission and manifest destiny, for commanders-in-chief contended that the nation must act to defend its moral ideals and then point to the accomplishment of pragmatic goals as evidence that the United States had fulfilled its moral destiny (1994, 206, 219).¹³

The literature, Bostdorff (1994) says, suggests that presidents often speak of foreign crises as follows: (1) the United States is passive and primarily wants world peace and increased welfare of other nations, (2) when attacked by another nation, the United States, as hero, becomes active and retaliatory only as a last resort to defend itself or other nations of goodwill, (3) the United States has the capability and determination to defend itself when needed, (4) crises are tests of national will, with emphasis being on American character rather than the consequences of war (it is more important to speak about the United States proving it is tough than the pragmatic aspects of war, which sometimes leads to dangerous games of chicken), (5) presidents ask to be evaluated in terms of progress and efficiency (they did what they set out to do, which they hope shows they are good leaders), (6) the United States is the victim, and the enemy is responsible for the crisis (which helps rally national unity, stir popular support for the president's policy and deflect any responsibility for U.S. contribution the crisis, a sort of name and

¹³ Bostdorff says her research corroborates that of Windt (1973, 1990), Gregg and Hauser (1973) and Birdsell (1987), who concluded that presidents tend to elevate foreign crises into tests of national will in their rhetoric (1994, 221).

blame the enemy approach) and (7) the enemy is diabolical (which helps rally support presidential crisis leadership) (12).¹⁴

Bostdorff (1994, 6) found most presidents inflated events in their rhetoric, expanding their power in foreign affairs at the expense of Congress. And her concern is that presidential crisis rhetoric too often presents crises as tests of credibility where the actors have to prove their courage “through daring, and all too often reckless, acts of military intervention” (1994, 223).

But Bostdorff’s (1994) study is of crisis, not war. She acknowledges that “unlike war, crisis connotes a short-term issue, something that will be resolved fairly quickly and with limited sacrifice [and that] crisis does not suggest the elusive goal of complete victory, as war does” (5-6).

¹⁴ See, for instance, Brockriede, W., and Scott, R.L. 1970. *Moments in the Rhetoric of the Cold War*. New York: Random House, 80-93; Pratt, J.W., 1970. “An Analysis of Three Crisis Speeches,” *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 34,194-203; Windt, T.O., Jr. 1973. “The Presidency and Speeches on International Crises: Repeating the Rhetorical Past.” *Speaker and Gavel* 11, 6-14; Gregg, R.B., and Hauser, G.A., “Richard Nixon’s April 30, 1970 Address on Cambodia: The ‘Ceremony’ of Confrontation,” *Speech Monographs* 40 (1973), 167-181; Cherwitz, R.A., 1978. “Lyndon Johnson and the ‘Crisis’ of Tonkin Gulf: A President’s Justification for War,” *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 42, 93-104; Cherwitz, R.A. 1980. “Masking Inconsistency: The Tonkin Gulf Crisis.” *Communication Quarterly* 28, 27-37; Hahn, D.F., 1980. “Corrupt Rhetoric: President Ford and the *Mayaguez* Affair,” *Communication Quarterly* 28, 38-43; Newman, R.P. 1983. “Pity the Helpless Giant: Nixon on Cambodia,” *Essays in Presidential Rhetoric*, Rev. ed. Ed. T. Windt with B. Ingold. 1983. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1984, 204-223; Bass, J.D. 1985. “The Appeal to Efficiency as Narrative Closure: Lyndon Johnson and the Dominican Crisis.” *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 50, 103-120; Cherwitz, R.A., and Zagacki, K.S. 1986. “Consummatory Versus Justificatory Crisis Rhetoric.” *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 50, 307-324; Heisey, D.R. 1986. “Reagan and Mitterrand Respond to International Crisis: Creating Versus Transcending Appearances.” *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 50, 325-335; Klope, D.C. 1986. “Defusing a Foreign Policy Crisis: Myth and Victimage in Reagan’s 1983 Lebanon/Grenada Address.” *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 50, 336-349; Dowling, R.E., and Marraro, G. 1986. “Grenada and the Great Communicator: A Study in Democratic Ethics.” *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 50, 350-367; Birdsell, D.S. 1987. “Ronald Reagan on Lebanon and Grenada: Flexibility and Interpretation in the Application of Kenneth Burke’s Pentad.” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73, 267-279; Procter, D.E. 1987. “The Rescue Mission: Assigning Guilt to a Chaotic Scene.” *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 51, 245-255; Hauser, G.A. 1989. “Administrative Rhetoric and Public Opinion: Discussing the Iranian Hostages in the Public Sphere.” *American Rhetoric: Context and Criticism*. Ed. T. Benson. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 323-383; Dow, B.J. 1989. “The Function of Epideictic and Deliberative Strategies in Presidential Crisis Rhetoric.” *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 53, 294-310; Windt, T.O., Jr. 1990. “Presidents and Protesters: Political Rhetoric in the 1960s. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 24-44, 52-60;

Other scholars explore the cultural effects on problem definition. Rochefort and Cobb (1994) make the case that the conditions surrounding a problem are tied to the words used to describe it. They argue that “value concerns drive the process of public policy making in all fields” (163). They validate the importance of rhetoric in problem definition, as do Schneider and Ingram (1993), who talk about the images familiar to target populations, noting they are socially constructed and based upon stereotypes portrayed through symbolic language, metaphors and stories (334). These images are often a key part of rhetorical problem definition.

Bosso (in Rochefort and Cobb 1994) shows how

societal characteristics and cultural values converge with existing structural and political conditions to create the contexts within which political actors jockey to promote competing problem definitions and formulate public policy (200).

Bosso also helps us understand why the number of definitions considered is usually small. Most believe that dominant groups (usually business elites) control the institutions of power (such as the mass media and Congress) to the degree that new definitions are suppressed before they are widely considered. Thus, the range of alternatives is a “pitiful few” (in Rochefort and Cobb 1994, 184). This is even truer when it comes to foreign policy, as presidents are usually given the latitude to set foreign policy, although they often ask Congress, pro forma, for approval to go to war. And presidents must ask Congress to finance war. Nevertheless, presidents have the most information about crises as they have access to intelligence and foreign staff. They therefore have great control over the definition of the problem and the options to solve it.

Kay (2003, 60) says “the primary concern of most of the recent work in problem definition ... is with how issues are conceptualized by officials and by the public at

large.” Other areas of importance are policymakers’ understanding of causality and problem ownership.¹⁵ Kay (2003) says the problem definition literature makes clear that ““policymakers’ conceptualizations of an issue serve as a means of ‘filtering out’ irrelevant (and perhaps even inconvenient) information” (64). She also notes that “issues that are identified with national security or civil rights generally receive more attention (not to mention more resources) from policymakers than those viewed as representing ‘lower priority’ matters”” (2003, 60). This is particularly important as we analyze presidential rhetoric justifying war.

Aside from these limited forays into the role of persuasion in problem definition, the literature has not adequately delved into the connection between problem definition and rhetoric, including the use of symbols, antithetical language and core values to promote policy. Nor has it adequately investigated why presidents (and other politicians) use rhetoric that relies upon the emotive, religious and patriotic.

Given the importance of rhetorical problem definition in the creation and promotion of policy, it behooves scholars to further examine the relationship between presidential rhetoric and policy type, an area to which we now turn.

Policy Typologies

There is extensive literature on policy typologies, which attempts to classify policy and provide insight into these types of policies. Theodore Lowi (1964) developed a classificatory scheme for distributive, redistributive, regulatory and (later) constituent policies (Steinberger 1980). This section, however, limits the discussion to some features

¹⁵ When presidents strongly promote a worldview of faith, scholars might question their view of causality: Does their rhetoric reflect a “wish it were so” attitude, do they believe “a” causes “b,” where do they stand on science versus faith, etc.

of social regulatory policy, as developed by Tatalovich and Daynes (1988), as this type of policy most incorporates regulating norms, values and moral codes of conduct, areas that presidents appear particularly drawn to in their pre-war rhetoric.¹⁶ Tatalovich and Daynes (1988) define social regulatory policy as “the exercise of legal authority to modify or replace community values, moral practices, and norms of interpersonal conduct with new standards of behavior” (1).

War policy, especially that promoted rhetorically, does not fit neatly into Lowi’s broad policy typologies (neither does anti-Communism or anti-terrorism policy).¹⁷ Like regulatory policy,¹⁸ war policy seeks to regulate the behavior of individuals and groups. Indeed, Lowi said public policy is simply “officially expressed intention backed by a sanction,” and that all public policies are coercive (Tatalovich and Daynes, 1998, x). War policy seems to lend itself to a particularly strong blend of coercive rhetoric by presidents. Perhaps that is because war calls upon citizens to offer their lives and tax money. And there may be other security sanctions, as well as subtle dissuasion to express dissent.

Unlike other regulatory policy, social regulatory policy attempts to regulate non-economic behavior that is seen as corrupting society by tapping into values and norms.

¹⁶ It should be noted that Edelman’s (1974) focus on the symbolic dimension of politics could also be seen as a typology, according to Steinberger (1980).

¹⁷ Terrorism is a unique, even peculiar policy. Terrorism policy is highly complex because the enemy is decentralized, diffuse and adheres to no rules of engagement. It is the type of policy that leads to the “political deadlock and policy paralysis” to which Brodtkin refers (1987, 571). Whereas an issue is defined as “a special kind of policy situation, with identifiable causes or sources, definite characteristics, and a limited number of outcomes,” (Eyestone 1978, 3) the causes and sources of terrorism may be hidden and diffuse, its means unpredictable and the ways to address it mystifying. Inherited conflicts such as that in Vietnam more readily fits into this description.

¹⁸ Lowi was primarily concerned with economic policy. Therefore, war policy does not fit his typology specifically (and indeed typologies have been criticized for lacking ways to objectively assign policies into distinct categories – see Smith 2002). However, the war with Iraq and the conflict with Vietnam have elements of each of the typologies, although they are most akin to regulatory policy because its synonyms are “police power” and “government intervention” (Tatalovich and Daynes 2005, xiii).

Convincing citizens to go to war is not just an economic exercise, but when presidents promote war through their rhetoric, they often frame values in extreme language that taps into moralism (including good versus evil), patriotism and religiosity. Thus, the language of war policy may exhibit many characteristics of social regulatory policy, while the policy itself may not. This paper's conception of war policy expressed rhetorically, then, best fits within Tatalovich and Daynes' (1988) social regulatory policy because the rhetoric attempts to simultaneously export those social (and economic) values to non-democratic regimes and regulate behavior. However, war policy itself is unlike social regulation, such as abortion policy. So this is a somewhat unconventional application of this area of literature.

The aspects of morality touched on by the advocates of policy typologies is perhaps most relevant to this work, although it, too, is not a perfect fit. Lowi observes that social regulatory policy is "more ideological, more moral, more directly derived from fundamental values, more intense, less utilitarian, more polarized, and less prone to compromise" (Tatalovich and Daynes 2005, xiii).

In laying out the parameters of social regulatory policy, Tatalovich and Daynes outline three major beliefs about policy adoption: First, "policies arise out of the demands and preferences of actors in the political environment, including interest groups, politicians and bureaucratic agents)" (Haider-Markel and O'Brien 1997, 553). This paper does not delve into the nuts and bolts of how policy is made, but rather focuses on how two presidents communicated their preferences for war policy through their rhetoric.

Second, "new policy is more likely to be adapted when it builds incrementally on existing policy" (Haider-Markel and O'Brien 1997, 553). Again, this paper does not

examine whether or not Bush and Johnson built upon existing war policy, but rather how they rhetorically promoted it. War is an extreme policy, so it seems less incremental, although Johnson inherited a war that he escalated.

Finally, Tatalovich and Daynes built upon the idea that “public policy is often a reaction to the perceived scope of the problem and/or the salience of the issue” (Haider-Markel and O’Brien 1997, 553). Here then is an area where rhetorical promotion of policy seems to fit. Rhetorical problem definition by presidents promoting war may enhance the scope and salience of the problem by the use of antithetical language, symbols, causal stories and the other techniques this work addresses. Issue salience is aided by the fact that presidents have high standing with citizens and elites in matters of foreign affairs and crisis. And, as mentioned, rhetoric has become governance in the world of presidents.

Thus, we bring in one aspect of Lowi’s definition of public policy that has received less attention – that policy must be “officially expressed” and it must include in that expression “intention.” To convince us to go to war, that most awesome of undertakings, presidents must express their intentions. They do so most persuasively and most often through their rhetoric, employing one of their most powerful assets – the bully pulpit. In this sense, their persuasiveness in large part substitutes for outright coercion, although more subtle coercive intentions may be at work to quash dissent, such as insinuations that not seeing the potential spread of Communism as against the interests of U.S. and world democracies or that to criticize war policy is an attack on the troops and therefore inherently unpatriotic. When that rhetorical persuasion taps into the core values

and norms that are part of Tatalovich and Daynes' social regulatory policy, it can be even more powerful.

Lowi says that social policy is different from economic policy in that it is characterized by "radical" rather than "mainstream" politics. Radical policy seeks to eliminate social actions (abortions, for instance). Mainstreamists only want to regulate or channel social actions (pollution, for example). War is not social policy, but it tends to fit the radical category. Both Johnson and Bush sought to end dictatorial regimes, to stamp out what they considered extremist ideology and to replace that ideology with what they considered mainstream government and thought (democracy) (Tatalovich and Daynes 2005, xiv).

As Lowi notes, "mainstream political actors avoid taking a moral posture toward the conduct to be regulated; conduct is to be regulated only because *it is injurious in its consequences* ... For the radical, conduct is to be regulated because *it is good or bad in itself*" ... The objective of radical regulation is complete elimination of the conduct" (Tatalovich and Daynes 2005, xiv).

In Lowi's new classification grid, the tendencies are to see regulatory policy in terms of "sin" for radicalists, as opposed to "error" for mainstreamists (Tatalovich and Daynes 2005, xiv). Lowi points out that in fact "political leaders can transform politics through radicalization, by adding a moral dimension to the policy discourse" (Tatalovich and Daynes 2005, xviii).

Lowi said mainstream politicians were more likely to seek political consensus, while radical politicians were less open to consensus and were more ideological (Tatalovich and Daynes 1998, xiii). Lowi concludes that "(moral) policy causes (radical)

politics” (Tatalovich and Daynes 2005, xxiii). Additionally, Tatalovich and Daynes conclude that Republicans exploit social regulatory issues to mobilize their base (1988).

Part of typologies is the “definitional process,” or the “way in which particular policy meanings are developed and disseminated,” (Steinberger 1980, 193). But little research has focused on the “question of meaning selection,” how “meanings are thought up, ratified and propagated by organized political processes” (Steinberger 1980, 194).

If indeed Lowi’s typologies show that different kinds of policies have different kinds of politics associated with them, then perhaps war policy promoted by presidential rhetoric has different kinds of rhetorical techniques (tied to politics and other factors) associated it. And perhaps there are some differences in how presidents speak about war, which says something about public policy that has not been well explored. Even Steinberger has acknowledged that Edelman’s (1974) emphasis on the symbolic dimension of politics is among those typologies that “seems to focus on a particularly salient aspect of public policy and to provide a basis for sound theorizing” (1980, 186). Perhaps it makes sense that social regulatory policy, rhetorically promoted by presidents making a case for going to war, will be more black and white, patriotic and religious (1980, 186).

Steinberger (1980) says “it has proved nearly impossible to confidently identify a particular policy as being of this type or that,” especially as public policy is complex and ambiguous (186-87). Nevertheless, different presidents may see war policy as more or less social regulatory, and their rhetoric may reflect that. As Steinberger (1980) puts it, “the import and significance of any particular policy is, in the most general sense, indeterminate and open to interpretation and dispute” (188). After all, “the social world

... is essentially a series of socially constructed meanings” (1980, 188). And indeed, it is those meanings presidents seek to create with their pre-war rhetoric. Or, put another way,

socially constructed meanings generally appear as ‘typifications’ ... Such typifications, taken together, describe not merely social meanings but also social reality ... Typifications ... are generally and commonly employed by participants in the political process to define public policies ... Thus, to talk about the different types of policies is to ‘conceptualize some of the ways in which participants tend to define policies’ (Steinberger 1980, 189).

The meaning of a policy (i.e. the participants’ understanding of a policy’s purpose, potential impact and relationship to other policies) must be “attached to it by the various participants in the policy process” (Steinberger 1980, 189), and presidents are key participants in war policy. This goes beyond Schattschneider’s (1960) teaching about the way participants try to manipulate the scope of conflict to further their policy preferences because

efforts to define and redefine policies are not, as Schattschneider would have it, simply matters of strategy or distortion; they are in fact unavoidable if policies are to be at all relevant and meaningful ... This ... implies ... that various participants will define a single policy in various ways not simply out of tactical or prudential considerations but, rather, because of contrasting perspectives or worldviews (Steinberger 1980, 190).

Steinberger (1980) says typologies broaden Schattschneider’s insight by showing that “conflict or disagreement is not limited to the issue of scope, of public versus private, but may also include an entire range of other questions dealing with political impact, economic impact, motive [and] *relationships to basic values* (italics mine), etc. (190).

Steinberger (1980) highlights the importance of evaluating the meaning and definition of policies, noting that “one may ... wonder if some meanings are more correct, or more appropriate, than others ... If so, then surely one of the primary tasks of

the policy analyst would be to determine the truest meaning of a particular policy” (191), which I would add is the goal of this work.

Steinberger wonders if certain policies tend to be defined in characteristic ways, similar to what is investigated in this research. He also asks if certain actors (here, presidents) tend to see policies in terms of certain dimensions as they seek to make sense of the political world (here, how presidents define war policy pre-war and pre-war-escalation). He wonders how these definitions are formulated and disseminated (here, how presidents define and promote war policy in their speeches). Finally, he wonders if meanings are likely to multiply or become fewer during the decision process (here, do presidents inflate meaning as they continue to give speeches selling war?).

The Nature of Political Rhetoric

Rhetoric is an important tool for presidents. In fact, presidents have more control over the messages they communicate than they do over any other aspect of the communication process, with the exception of issues that force themselves upon the public agenda. Indeed, “presidents have almost complete freedom in the language they use to express their views on matters of public policy” (Edwards 2003, 127).

But what is political rhetoric exactly? Here, “political” is defined as exercising or seeking power in the governmental or public affairs of a state” (Webster’s 2003, 1497). Rhetoric is a “type of communicative behavior [that] enters the realm of arguing but falls short of deliberative behavior,” according to Risse (1999, 3), who says “when actors communicate rhetorically, they justify their behavior, their preferences, and their definition of the situation.” Risse says rhetoric involves persuasive argument and is based

upon the assumption that there are those willing to change their preferences or definitions of a situation.

Inherent in political rhetoric process are validity claims emphasizing the “moral rightness of the norms underlying arguments.” In this process, actors, in this case political leaders, share what Risse calls a “common lifeworld,” or “supply of collective interpretations of the world and of themselves, as provided by language, a common history, or culture.” They also share “a common system of norms and rules perceived as legitimate,” as well as a “repertoire of collective understandings to which they can refer” (Risse 1999, 5). It is these commonalities that presidents call upon when making their case for war because they act as shorthand everyone recognizes and tap into people’s emotions.

Wei (2000, 96) says political rhetoric is “both an expression of emotion and an appeal to others to become emotionally involved.” He says political rhetoric often seeks to evoke patriotic emotions and is a means for achieving political dominance. Patriotic rhetoric, for instance, may be a way to encourage uncritical acceptance of a problem definition.

Bostdorff (1994) says “rhetoric is sometimes cynical and manipulative, sometimes high-minded and admirable, but it is always persuasive discourse that, especially when uttered by presidents, helps construct our political realities” (3). Some studies have concluded that rhetoric is about values, and partisan values in particular (Sniderman and Theriault 1999; Wittman 1995).

Jerit (2002) adds that “political rhetoric is characterized by partisan or ideological arguments – i.e., claims about the responsibility, or the lack thereof, for government

action” (15), or what Stone would call “causal stories.” Nevertheless, Converse (1964) points out that only a small part of the citizenry make political decisions on an ideological basis, while the majority makes them according to group loyalties, the nature of the times and other factors. Thus, elites cannot make purely ideological appeals because they have to appeal beyond their core supporters, which may be why they make use of various rhetorical devices (as discussed below) and patriotic, religious and non-specific rhetoric.

Foucault (1980) says discourse, especially dominant discourse (and certainly presidential discourse is dominant), structures our worldview and excludes other interpretations. Used strategically, discourse shapes actions based upon our perceptions of how the world should be. Thus, how leaders talk can give us clues to actions they might take and not take. For instance, if they talk strongly about one country being the source of a problem, especially a problem that could crop up again, we might infer they will take action regarding that country. The more inflated their language, the more serious action we might come to expect. According to this theory, strong presidential rhetoric against Communism stemming from Vietnam or terrorism stemming from Iraq are predictive of likely action against these countries, especially because presidential pre-escalation/war rhetoric is dominant, strategic discourse, these are problems that are unlikely to go away and they are perceived as highly threatening.

There have been a lot of studies of rhetoric and of political elites, but there has not been systematic study of how political rhetoric links political elites and citizens (Riker 1990, 56). Clearly, presidents and other world leaders believe rhetoric is an important link to citizens, or they would not place so much emphasis on it. Indeed, President Bill

Clinton bemoaned the 1994 defeat of congressional Democrats with these words: “The role of the president of the United States is message ... I got caught up in the parliamentary aspect of the presidency and missed the leadership, [the] bully pulpit, which is so critical” (Edwards 2003, 4). George H.W. Bush (Bush I) said his biggest disappointment as president was that “I just wasn’t a good enough communicator” (Edwards 2003, 6). The “Great Communicator,” President Ronald Reagan, said one of his “greatest frustrations during those eight years [of his presidency] was [his] inability to communicate to the American people and to Congress the seriousness of the threat we faced in Central America” (Edwards 2003, 6). Even Winston Churchill asserted that “of all the talents bestowed upon men, none is so precious as the gift of oratory” (Edwards 2003, 5). Nevertheless, some researchers believe president overestimate their capacity to win public opinion (Edwards 2003, 7).

As Hart (1984) points out, presidents have different rhetorical styles that reflect their leadership personality. Those who prize reason (and it as most politically advantageous) may appeal to logic and rationality often in their rhetoric. Similarly, those who value religion above all else (or who see it as most politically advantageous) may appeal to faith and scriptural ideas.¹⁹

There is a tendency for political information (including rhetoric) to devolve to the simplest message, or to cancel out “random components” as citizens do not know much about politics. This is because “substantial amounts of information [are] distributed unevenly in an electorate that pays sporadic attention to political events” (Ferejohn 1990, 14). Moreover, “the organization of political information depends on how it is presented,

¹⁹ Of course, the implication here is that faith is illogical and irrational, which is a much more complicated discussion.

or ‘framed’” (Ferejohn, 1990, 11). Such simplification in framing is often accomplished by symbols because they stand for more complex or unfamiliar things, enhance certain aspects and conceal others. These symbols idealize the identity and history of a people (Hinckley 1990). As Lasswell puts it, “any elite defends and asserts itself in the name of symbols of common destiny ... By the use of sanctioned words and gestures the elite elicits blood, work, taxes, applause, from the masses” (Hart 1984, 5). Thus, the central battle in any political conflict is often “the struggle over whose symbolic definition will prevail,” as Hinckley (1990) puts it (1).

Research also “suggests that information is retained in rough proportion to the existing stock of information on the topic” (Ferejohn 1990, 11). This suggests that if the president repeats his message, receivers are more likely to retain it, and possibly accept it (Ferejohn, 1990, 11).

Presidential Rhetoric as a Policy Tool

Rhetoric is also a policy tool, an instrument “through which governments seek to influence behavior and influence policy purposes” (Schneider and Ingram 1990, 511). As Kingdon (1984) noted, “the content of ideas themselves, far from being mere smokescreens or rationalizations, are integral parts of decision making in and around government (131).

Schlesinger (2008) says “in campaigns and in the White House, speeches not only reflect policies but frequently act as a policy-forcing mechanism: The fact of a pronouncement focuses and curtails any lingering debates – most of the time” (9).

If “public policy almost always attempts to get people to do things they otherwise would not have done, or it enables them to do things they might not have done otherwise,” then Schneider and Ingram (1990) posit that “individuals are more likely to take actions in support of policy goals if the goals or actions are (1) promoted by government officials as important, high priority issues, (2) consistent with their values, beliefs and preferences, [and] (3) associated with positive symbols, labels, images and events” (519-20). Symbolic and hortatory tools are one way government accomplishes this (along with authority, incentives, capacity-building and learning tools).

Symbolic and hortatory tools may be used by policy makers to encourage compliance with, or support of, a particular policy. Policy makers may appeal through intangible values (such as justice, fairness, equality, right and wrong, freedom, order, safety, preservation of traditional values, efficiency, effectiveness, etc.) or through the use of images, symbols and labels (Schneider and Ingram 1990, 519, 529). The assumption is that “people develop preferences on the basis of culturally induced values, and that they need to be convinced that a policy preferred alternative fits into their value scheme” (Schneider and Ingram 1990, 529). Such rationales “do not insert factual information or resources into the decision situation,” nor do they just involve weighing the benefits and costs or objective comparisons with other options. Rather, they “emphasize the positive aspects of the policy and seek to minimize the negative ones” (Schneider and Ingram 1990, 529). This may include

the use of images, symbols, and labels to associate the preferred activities with positively valued symbols ... [In fact,] policy may go to considerable lengths to associate desired behavior with positive (or at least neutral) labels and [to] avoid negative labeling (Schneider and Ingram 1990, 520).

Such tools are distinguished by the fact that they alter perceptions of the policy-preferred activities” (Schneider and Ingram 1990, 521).

The Rhetorical Presidency

Rhetoric is a very powerful tool for presidents. Neustadt (1986) says presidential power is wrapped up in the “power to persuade” (25).²⁰ Tulis (1987) says presidents use rhetoric more today than ever before and claims there is now a “rhetorical presidency,” aided by a mass media that enables presidents to speak immediately and directly to large national audiences and that encourages dramatic verbal performance.

As Stuckey (1991) sees it, the president is the nation’s “interpreter-in-chief” (1). And Edelman (1988) goes so far as to imply that rhetors such as presidents actually create reality by what they say and that, indeed, “political language *is* political reality” (104).

The rhetorical presidency was one of the major institutional developments of the 20th Century. As Ceaser et al. note, “popular or mass rhetoric, which presidents once employed only rarely, now serves as one of their principal (sic) tools in attempting to govern the nation” (in Cronin 1982, 234). Prior to the 20th Century, people did not trust “popular leadership through rhetoric.” Presidents preferred to communicate to the branches of government and rarely spoke to the people directly (in Cronin 1982, 234).

Today, as Ceaser et al. point out, “presidential speech and action increasingly reflect the opinion that speaking *is* governing. Speeches are written to become the events to which people react no less than [to the] ‘real’ events themselves” (in Cronin 1982, 234). President Kennedy, who mastered television, noted that presidents had become

²⁰ Neustadt, however, concentrated primarily on the president’s power to persuade Washington insiders.

more educational and psychic leaders than administrators and program developers (in Cronin 1982, 235). Johnson followed Kennedy with “a steady stream of oratory that swelled popular expectations of governmental capacity to a level that even his apologists now concede far exceeded what government could possibly achieve” (in Cronin 1982, 235), although he was less verbose about the Vietnam War prior to the Gulf of Tonkin incident, after which he made his first major public statement about the war (Vaughn 1985, 617).

Carter in his assertion that a president should be “the leader of the people,” rather than “the head of government” was, according to Ceaser et al., a “perfect expression of ... support for the doctrine of the rhetorical presidency” (in Cronin 1982, 246). He pledged to spend more time with people and gave more largely inspirational speeches to mobilize a popular constituency that could boost his poll ratings and power. He also merged policy and mood in his speech (in Cronin 1982, 240).

Ceaser et al. say the development of the rhetorical presidency is the result of three factors: (1) a modern doctrine of presidential leadership (most important), (2) the modern mass media, and (3) the modern presidential campaign. The authors note that the framers of the Constitution feared popular rhetoric (which they saw as “pure” democracy) on a mass scale would undermine the rational and enlightened self interests of citizens and so create instability. They did not want a representative government that looked only to public opinion as its guide (in Cronin 1982, 237). The framers worried that instead of consulting the “cool and deliberate sense of the community,” popular orators would be chained to public opinion, or mood, which would undermine the discretion and flexibility that statesmanship demands (in Cronin 1982, 237).

The founders reasoned that

in democracies, ... political success and fame are won by those orators who most skillfully give expression to transient, often inchoate, public opinion. Government by this means, if indeed it can be called governing, leads to constant instability as leaders compete with each other to tap the latest mood passing through the public. The paradox of government by mood is that it fosters neither democratic accountability nor statesmanly efficiency (in Cronin 1982, 237).

While the framers did not think popular rhetoric could be avoided in a republican system, they wanted to minimize reliance upon it and create institutions that could run efficiently without relying upon changing public opinion. That is one reason power was given to the people's representatives, who they believed would not be easily swayed by rhetoric, rather than directly to the people. The framers also were counting on the impact of popular rhetoric becoming muted as the nation grew (in Cronin 1982, 237).

In addition, the framers originally designed a presidential selection process that disallowed direct, active campaigning by candidates. They also designed the presidency so that it was more of a constitutional office, relying upon the formal powers of the Constitution and informal powers stemming from the office, rather than an institution that could stir mass opinion by rhetoric (in Cronin 1982, 238).

The framers thought presidential communication would focus on reminding the public of basic principles and that they would be informed about policy through presidential communications to Congress. Congress was expected to be reasoned and deliberative, not popular in nature.

Foreign Crisis Rhetoric

One area of the literature in this area that is particularly relevant is that of crisis rhetoric, especially as regards foreign affairs. War is indeed a crisis, and during crises

“presidents must persuasively advance claims of crisis in order to prompt public support for their crisis policies” (Bostdorff 1994, 1).

The impact of crisis rhetoric is especially enhanced when it is used by presidents regarding a foreign issue because presidents are symbols of national unity, citizens have greater reverence for them than they do for other government officials and citizens tend to believe presidential statements about foreign affairs because they believe the president has superior information in this area²¹ (Bostdorff 1994, 6). For instance, the Gulf of Tonkin incident that precipitated further U.S. involvement in Vietnam was relatively obscure, which worked to Johnson’s favor as few Americans knew enough about it to question the president’s words (Bostdorff 1994, 8). One could argue that the startling nature and audacity of 9/11 worked to Bush’s advantage in the same way, but even more so.

However, crisis rhetoric does not guarantee a president “persuasive success” because it is impossible to convince everyone of a president’s interpretation of the problem and impossible to get everyone to accept his proposed policy solution to it. Nevertheless,

presidents clearly possess resources that give them a decided advantage over those who articulate competing views ... If the commander-in-chief can persuade citizens to accept his preferred interpretation of a crisis and its resolution, he has much to gain (Bostdorff 1994, 8).

Presidents use crisis rhetoric to talk about their duties and responsibilities as president and commander-in-chief and to associate themselves with successful policies (Bostdorff 1994, 227). And

²¹ Given the controversy over the Iraq war at this writing, including questioning Bush’s justification for war, this may be changing.

during a foreign crisis, a president's references to his office, title, and responsibilities serve to legitimize his policy decisions. Such references also function as authoritative appeals to forestall questions and criticism. In effect, the president argues that he alone has the necessary expertise and power to make the proper decisions, a viewpoint that encourages citizens who revere democracy to defer to the president as though he were king (Bostdorff 1994, 228).

Use by presidents of such words as "we," "our nation" and "America" during a crisis help citizens identify with the president and can also encourage group conformity and discourage dissent, especially when presidents invoke national myths. Those who express opposition to the president or his policies may be viewed as cranks or traitors (Bostdorff 1994, 229).

During a crisis, "presidents try to evoke strong emotions" in their rhetoric "to build and maintain public support for the actions necessary to achieve crisis-oriented goals. They do so by presenting the situation ... as clearly, simply, and directly [as] a case of good versus evil" (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 505).

Edwards and Wayne (2003) say that Bush's actions following 9/11 "provide a good example of how presidential power expands during periods of national emergencies and how the enemy is demonized (2003, 504). For instance, they cite his contrast of "U.S. morality versus terrorist immorality." They point out that in a September 20, 2001, news conference, Bush rallied Americans to his anti-terrorism campaign by describing terrorists as "the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the twentieth century," saying they followed in the paths of fascism, Nazism and totalitarianism, that Osama bin Laden was "an evil man ... one of the worst" and that Saddam Hussein was evil (506). Johnson, too, did some of this characterization, but as he

struggled to find a convincing rationale to justify the American presence in Southeast Asia, ... he would discover that the traditional moral

arguments that presidents had used to support previous wars seemed inappropriate and political appeals were ineffective (Vaughn 1985, 617).

Edwards and Wayne (2003) say that “demonizing the bad guy as malevolent is a frequent tactic,” noting that in former President Jimmy Carter’s memoirs, “Keeping Faith,” he described the Ayatollah Khomeini as “fanatical, “insane” and “deranged” (2003, 506). Former President George H.W. Bush in the book, “A World Transformed,” compared Saddam Hussein to Hitler, noting Hussein had “disdain for international law,” misrepresented what had happened and lied to his neighbors. In May 13, 1999, remarks to veterans groups about Kosovo, former President Bill Clinton painted former Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic as “an irascible and irrational dictator, a war criminal” (506).

Wander (1984) notes that American foreign policy rhetoric personifies nations, but the abstract way in which presidents describe enemy nations also dehumanizes people. Indeed, Ivie (1980) found that presidential war rhetoric was replete with images of savagery. He says “a people strongly committed to the ideal of peace, but simultaneously faced with the reality of war, must believe that the fault for any such disruption of their ideal lies with others” or face “guilt that would otherwise threaten to drive the nation toward some form of self-mortification” (280).

Antithetical Appeals

Antithetical language draws delineations that are “sharply contrasted in character or purpose” (American Psychological Association). Examples for the purposes of this work include how presidents describe the main protagonists – Communism, guerrillas and North Vietnam by Johnson, or the United States, its coalition/allies and the “enemy,” variously defined as al Qaeda, Iran, North Korea, Saddam Hussein and Iraq, by Bush.

Bostdorff (1994) says antithetical appeals that characterize the enemy as evil and threatening create a situation in which diplomacy smacks of appeasement; thus the chances that innocent people will suffer is increased (226). She says antithetical appeals “allow citizens to place the blame for bloodshed on others, rather than to assume responsibility and guilt themselves” (1994, 226).

Finlay, Holsti and Fagen (1967) argue that painting a picture of an evil enemy allows a nation to assume “a posture of self-righteousness” and justify “any means” necessary to win (8). Bostdorff notes it can also provide rationalization for military action.

Antithetical appeals are one way presidents attempt to appeal to their audiences. As Bostdorff (1994) notes, researchers of foreign crises from a rhetorical perspective “must recognize that a president’s public messages are addressed to someone, that his discourse persuasively appeals, overtly or covertly, to some audience” (21). Thus, Burke (1950) says, presidential speakers must identify with their audience.

As Taylor (2007, 667) points out, “numerous critics have established how, following 9/11, the rhetoric of George W. Bush powerfully revived Cold War tropes and symbolically translated terrifying and agonizing events into a familiar vocabulary of moralized, binary oppositions” (Bostdorff 2003; Cloud 2004; Hariman 2004; Jackson 2005; Johnson 2002; Lazar and Lazar 2004; Murphy 2003; Noon 2004).

Use of Symbols

The symbolic politics literature, pioneered by Harold Lasswell, Murray Edelman, Kenneth Burke and others, “analyzes the use of symbols, whether in language or ritualized behavior, in giving meaning and structure to political reality” (Hinckley 1990,

2). However, Hinckley (1990) says the presidency literature rarely cites the symbolic politics literature, while the symbolic politics literature suggests the need for, but does not provide, work on presidential symbolism. Further, “presidential leadership is not treated as a problem in symbolism” (3). Thus, this work is an attempt to more fully integrate these literatures in a new context.

Presidents often use symbols to frame issues, as Edwards and Wayne (2003) note.

Symbols are simple or familiar things that stand for other more complex or unfamiliar things and may be used to describe politicians, events, issues, or some other aspect of the political world ... The choice of symbols inevitably highlights certain aspects of an issue or event and conceals others, just as in other forms of framing (130, 162).

Hinckley (1990) speaks of a symbolic presidency – “a particular set of expectations about the office that are held by the public, described by journalists and teachers, and encouraged by the presidents themselves” (130). Hinckley (1990) defines symbols as “words (gestures or any series of actions)” that “call forth a larger and usually more complex set of ideas than the literal meaning of the object” (4). Symbols typically evoke “ideas already in the public philosophy ..., characterizing the identity and history of a people, often in idealized terms. Symbols evoke ideas the society wants to believe are true.” A symbol also can “help produce the independent condition it stands for, including “a call to action in war” (Hinckley 1990, 5). “Symbols, also, can give false comfort and distract attention from problems that need to be faced” (Hinckley 1990, 7).

Hinckley (1990) calls political symbolism “central to the office of the President” (1). She says “symbols are purposive; hence we need to evaluate the intent of the symbol-givers” (1990, 8).

Hart (1984) says various scholars have argued that much of politics is about symbols, noting

as [Harold] Lasswell put it, ‘any elite defends and asserts itself in the name of symbols of common destiny ... By the use of sanctioned words and gestures the elite elicits blood, work, taxes, applause, from the masses. When the political order works smoothly, the masses venerate the symbols; the elite, self-righteous and unafraid, suffers from no withering sense of immortality.’ Symbols are then means and ends of politics as they are both valued in themselves and can be manipulated to influence others. (5).

In her study of rhetoric by Presidents Truman through Reagan, Hinckley (1990) found that

symbols can be used politically to shape attitudes, build support, persuade to action or in one widely accepted definition of political power, to help A get B to do what A wants done (1).

Hinckley (1990) says writers say “the central battle in a political conflict is often ‘the struggle over whose symbolic definition of a situation will prevail’ and that “control of the symbolic actions of government is as important as the control of its tangible effects.” One writer whom Hinckley does not name has gone so far as to call “the central political activity the symbolic manipulation of words to define situations” (1). Thus, symbols can manipulate the way an issue is presented (Edelman 1964, 6).

Problem definition literature also indicates the usefulness of emphasizing national symbols (e.g., freedom) (Peters 1996), painting a vision (Reagan’s “Morning in America,” Johnson’s “Great Society”) and describing policies in symbolic or metaphorical ways (Bush’s “War on Terror”). One reason for this is that symbols can simplify complex policy, reassure citizens that policies are for their own good and transcend differences.

Johnson “Great Society” served as a symbol for his administration. Who wouldn’t want a “great society,” but who can really define what it means, Edwards and Wayne ask (2003, 132).

Presidents are sometimes faulted for inadequate use of symbols. In fact, many observers believe that “a president’s failure to lead the public to adopt broad symbols for his administration can cause severe problems in relations with the public (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 132). For instance, Presidents Carter, Bush I and Clinton were faulted for lack of “unifying themes and cohesion in their programs and for failing to inspire the public with a sense of purpose or ideas to follow. Instead of providing the country with a sense of their vision and priorities, they emphasized discrete problem solving,” while Reagan “continually invoked symbols of his vision of America and its past” (Edwards 2003, 162).

Using symbols and other rhetorical devices is quite different from providing sheer information because symbols evoke emotion. Lakoff (2008) says

if you believe in the 18th Century view of the mind, you will ... think that all you need to do is give people the facts and figures and they will reach the right conclusion. You will think that all you need to do is point out where their interests lie, and they will act politically to maximize them ... You will not need to appeal to emotion ... You will not have to speak of values ... You will not have to frame the facts ... If you believe in the 18th Century view of the mind, you will ... be dead wrong. You will be ignoring the cognitive unconscious, not stating your deepest values, suppressing legitimate emotions, accepting the other side’s frames as if they were neutral, cowering with fear at what you might be called and refusing to frame the facts so they can be appreciated. You will be ineffective (11, 12).

This is so because the mind, says Lakoff (2008), is largely unconscious (14). Moreover, we cannot “freely choose not to think certain thoughts when certain words are used and when [our] brain is tuned to activate those thoughts,” (Lakoff 2008, 19) such as when we

think “cowardice” when the words “cut and run” are used. As Western (2007) has shown, emotion is central in political persuasion.

Stone (1988) says the use of symbols and other rhetorical tools, such as metaphors, help us understand the problem and reinforces the idea that description of the problem is the only way to understand it (106-165). Stone (1988) looks at symbolism as a way to help define problems through such means as stories, synecdoches (figures of speech in which a part is used to represent the whole), metaphors and ambiguity (108-126). She says how a problem is defined determines its saliency and relevancy to the public.²²

Kingdon (1993, 103) says symbols focus attention on a problem, the type of language used determines the size of the audience that becomes involved and well-chosen symbols expand the conflict. Hardy, Palmer and Phillips (2000) note that “symbols, narratives, metaphors employed by the enunciator must possess receptivity. They must resonate with other actors; otherwise they will fail to convey the meaning intended by the enunciator” (1,236). Moreover, symbols must “be familiar to others and capable of dislodging existing symbols.” Orators may create new concepts, but they are more likely to borrow ones that already have been used, as the former takes creativity and power.

Edelman in particular has concentrated on “the pervasive and profound importance of symbols in politics” (Elder and Cobb 1983, 1). The essence of Edelman’s (1971) work is that the type of symbols used affects political action or inaction. He looks at how democracy and power work, believing democratic governments are supposed to shape the wants and preferences of citizens, which they do this through symbols, myths, rituals and political language (7). In “Constructing the Political Spectacle,” Edelman

²² Lakoff and Stone might disagree on this, depending how Stone would define description of the problem.

(1988) talks about how language, including symbols, helps to maintain power, status and resource allocations (24). This can in turn mask the real problems. He looks at how language, including symbols, determines what aspect of a problem receives focus. He says government manipulates citizens' views of what is and is not important.

Edelman (1988) says symbols also are useful for identifying social worth and therefore one's perceived enemies: "Enemies, then, are identifiable persons or stereotypes or persons to whom evil traits, intentions or actions can be attributed" (87). Hinckley (1990) found presidents used symbols to invoke national pride and patriotism, to appeal to the American people for support, to identify with the people as one of them, and to propose and explain the administration's actions (42).

Presidents may

manipulate symbols in attempts not only to lead public opinion, but also to deliberately mislead it ... The presidency uniquely lends itself to symbolic manipulation as presidents personify government and the nation's heritage, which image they can enhance by television appearances, appearances with heads of state, foreign travel and ceremonies (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 133).

Thus, symbols may highlight certain aspects, while concealing others (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 130, 162). "If presidents can persuade a substantial segment of the public to adopt symbols that are favorable to them, they will be in a better position to influence public opinion" (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 131). For instance, "enemies ... are identifiable persons or stereotypes of persons to whom evil traits, intentions, or actions can be attributed" (1988, 87). If portrayed as a threat to society, symbolic reference to enemies can help drive policy.

Bostdorff (1994) says our definition of a foreign crisis and our understanding of its nature and means of solution are primarily constructed through presidential rhetoric that includes symbols, rather than by objective, independent means (2). Such symbol-laden rhetoric can help determine the course of action presidents choose to take and in some cases narrow their policy choices by binding them with their own rhetoric (1994, 159).

Use of Metaphors

Metaphors are also useful rhetorical tools in political rhetoric. Metaphors illustrate parts of the whole meaning. Metaphors can also be thought of as “the more familiar object to which a less familiar or ambiguous phenomenon is compared” (Schlesinger and Lau 2000, 613). Metaphors are more abstract than the actual issue.

Schlesinger and Lau (2000) postulate that political elites and the public communicate about complex policies in part through “reasoning by policy metaphor,” (611) or comparing proposed policy alternative policies to more readily understood social institutions, which they define as the “complex combinations of norms, practices, and organizational arrangements that shape various collective activities.” These are constructed by sources of cultural authority (which certainly includes presidents) and personal experience (Schlesinger and Lau 2000, 613). Thus terrorism issues are described in terms of war (the “war on terrorism”). In fact, like the health policy the authors studied, terrorism lends itself to policy metaphors because of its “salience, complexity and multivalent nature.” The public then brings its own experience to the comparison (Schlesinger and Lau 2000, 614).

Such metaphors, Schlesinger and Lau (2000) say, make complex issues more comprehensible because they enable elites and the public to draw upon common understanding. Reasoning by metaphor occurs, they say, because the average American knows virtually nothing about public issues, political debates, institutions or lexicons (in large part because it pays little attention to them). Yet, the public understands and may even influence policy at some level. Policy metaphors provide mental shortcuts that can replace ideological reasoning.

Presidents use seemingly simplistic policy metaphors that many people can understand (that stretch across domains) to argue for their war policy. They may also use a variety of metaphors so that individuals recognize desirable features in at least one type (Schlesinger and Lau 2000, 621).

The policy metaphors concept is similar to that of rhetorical frames (indeed Schlesinger and Lau 2000 call policy metaphors “conceptual frames” and “templates”) or condensational symbols, and, it is argued here, can be extended beyond public understanding of social institutions to public understanding of war policy as communicated through political rhetoric (612).

Political rhetoric is the most powerful vehicle through which such reasoning occurs by presidents as they command the bully pulpit. Indeed, Schlesinger and Lau (2000) suggest scholars undertake further research to “attempt to establish a common *language* (italics mine) for policy deliberation that is based on a shared understanding of policy metaphors” (623).

Another reason policy metaphors are powerful, according to Schlesinger and Lau (2000), is that they have an affective component. “It has long been recognized that much

of the power of metaphors involves the emotional responses that can induce in a variety of political or social contexts” (612). But the affective quality of these metaphors is not just useful for the public – it helps less sophisticated decision makers select policy alternatives based upon their own emotional responses and the emotional responses they receive. In addition, such metaphors help less sophisticated decision makers selected policy alternatives.

In addition to being descriptive, policy metaphors can be prescriptive. As Rein and Schöen point out, metaphors can generate a “normative leap ... from data to recommendations, from fact to values, from ‘is’ to ‘ought’ that can powerfully shape the preferences of decision makers” (Schlesinger and Lau 2000, 94). Thus, reasoning by policy metaphor can be an integral part of problem definition, as well as prescriptive problem definition (what is predicted will happen if the issue is not addressed the way a policy maker prescribes).

Schlesinger and Lau (2000) say metaphors are invoked to help the public understand events that are both novel (terrorism) and long-standing problems (ongoing war) (612-13). In short, policy metaphors can negate the need for intense intellectual investment for both the public and decision makers. One could argue they contribute to mental (and democratic) laziness, or a lack of political sophistication, as easily as one could argue that they are necessary to process complex information in a complex policy-making process in a complex global environment.

Schlesinger and Lau (2000) take a more charitable approach, saying that the use of such devices allow the public to make “reasoned (and reasonable) assessments of policy even if largely ignorant of the details of policy or the workings of American

politics” (623). But those opposing the Iraq and Vietnam wars might well argue that demanding and comprehending more details about the policies and the way politics worked in these situations may have negated the more compelling effect of the nicer sounding policy metaphors.

Schlesinger and Lau (2000) help summarize why presidents might use metaphors to make the case for war: (1) to communicate more effectively, (2) to overcome policy complexities, (3) to appeal to emotions, (4) to take advantage of public ignorance, (5) to build broad coalitions of support, and (6) to guide their own policy choices.

Brodkin (1987) points to another reason president might use such metaphors. She says that politicians are unable to manage policy conflict because the “institutions of governance are both too weak to manage a modern political economy and too porous to restrict the demands made upon them.” Thus, “administrative agencies may work in tandem with politicians who try to depoliticize policy choices by reframing them to appeal to widely shared values” (571). If managing a political economy is ungovernable, managing international war policy seems even more difficult. Perhaps when policy complexity increases, presidents draw upon simplistic metaphors all the more in their attempt at rhetorical management.

Use of Frames

Another rhetorical device used by presidents is framing. A frame is “a central organizing idea for making sense of an issue or conflict [that] suggests what the controversy is about and what is at stake.” A frame defines and simplifies a complex issue. For instance, welfare can be framed as a program to help the poor or as a giveaway to slackers (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 159).

According to Lakoff (2008), many people get framing backward: framing comes before policy. Policy fits the frame, not vice versa. Indeed, he says, “policy is about fitting frames – moral frames. The mistake is when people think framing is about selling policy” (67-8). For example,

if health care is framed as ‘health insurance,’ then it will be seen through an insurance frame, and the policy will fit that frame: it will be a business, with profits, administrative costs, premiums, actuaries, outsourcing, care criteria, denial of care to maximize profits and many people not buying insurance even if it is required by law. Whereas if health care is seen as protection – on par with policy and fire protection, food safety and so on – then it becomes part of the moral mission of government, where the role of government is protection and empowerment (Lakoff 2008, 67-8).

Lakoff says every word is defined relative to a frame or conceptual framework (Powell 2003). The power of framing is evidenced by the fact that politicians spend millions of dollars developing language, based upon polling and focus group input they use to test the framing of their rhetoric.

Moreover, Lakoff (2008) says “language gets its power because it is defined relative to frames, prototypes, metaphors, narratives, images and emotions (2008, 15). He says “the neural circuitry need to create frame structures is relatively simple, and so frames tend to structure a huge amount of our thought” (22).

Edwards and Wayne (2003) say the president’s goal is to influence which attitudes and information people retrieve from their memories and incorporate into their judgments of his policies and performance. The frame helps by interacting with “an individual’s memory to prime certain considerations, making some more accessible than others and therefore more likely to be used in formulating a political preference.” The frame serves to raise “the priority and weight that individuals assign to particular attitudes already stored in their memories” (129).

Framing demands

less of the public than directly persuading citizens on the merits of a policy proposal. [With a frame,] the president does not have to persuade people to change their basic values and preferences. He does not have to convince citizens to develop expertise and acquire and process extensive information about the details of a policy proposal. In addition, framing ... [is] less susceptible to distortion by journalists and opponents than direct persuasion on the merits of a policy proposal (Edwards 2003, 160).

Instead the president often uses simple themes that may have been identified through public opinion research as favoring his positions (Edwards 2003, 160).

Zaller (1992) says one of the ways the public keeps informed is through stereotypes and frames, which influence their views (8). Schneider and Ingram (1993) believe framing through stereotypes determines policy agendas and that framing often involves creating “us” and “them” categories (338-339).

*Presidential Religious Rhetoric; Moral Leadership*²³

Throughout American history, presidents have used religious rhetoric to rally Americans and the world to the cause of spreading freedom and democracy, especially in times of global hostilities. Cold War presidential rhetoric provides some examples. As such, they have assumed a role as moral leaders, or what I like to call “priests-in-chief.”

Some view President Woodrow Wilson’s faith as a primary influence on his foreign policy, while others have seen it as a vague guide. But some scholars have been struck by President Harry Truman’s “explicit grounding in religious dogma and imagery” as demonstrated in a 1949 address to Christians and Jews: “The defense of mankind

²³ The problem in trying to sum up the literature on this subject is that it crosses so many disciplines, none of which specifically combines pre-war religious rhetoric by presidents, especially in the context of problem definition. Among the disciplines: communications, diplomatic history, foreign policy, literature, public policy, political science, sociology and religion.

against these attacks lies in the faith we profess – the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God” (Truman 1949). Similarly, President Dwight D. Eisenhower proclaimed in 1954: “Democracy is nothing in the world but a spiritual conviction, a conviction that each of us is enormously valuable because of a certain standing before our own God” (Eisenhower 1954). And likewise President John F. Kennedy said in his 1961 inaugural address, “The same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe – the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God” (Kennedy 1961). Johnson, too, quoted Scripture and made some references to a secular American religion.

President Jimmy Carter is seen as basing his foreign policy on a promotion of human rights that reflected his religious beliefs, according to his national security adviser. President Ronald Reagan was explicit about using religion as his guide in foreign policy, relying upon an Old Testament view of good and evil in the Cold War and apocalyptic themes from the Book of Revelation in his view of the threat of nuclear war. Few would doubt the importance of religion to the policies of the current president, George W. Bush (Preston 2006).²⁴

Scholars say we need to know more about how religious views informed the foreign policies of other presidents in the 20th Century, including that of President Johnson (Preston 2006, 807). To this it is worth adding that, although President Bush’s religious beliefs are more evident in his rhetoric, we also need to know how his views informed his policies.

²⁴ Preston says diplomatic historians “have been quick to point out the essential continuities between Bush’s post-9/11 foreign policy and ... the influence of religion” (2006, 784).

Typically, presidents' religious rhetoric is the "rhetoric of virtue," Sicherman (2007) says. This "derives clearly from religious elements, mostly Protestant Christianity, but is sufficiently vague to [en]compass the multiple faiths that have distinguished Americans from the outset" (170). He says "the United States, perhaps more than other countries, still invokes a religiously derived rhetoric of virtue" (2007, 113). However, Sicherman (2007) found that when presidents relied upon this American civil religion,²⁵ although based upon theological ideas, to combat another religion (Islamism, for example), it didn't "travel well" (113).²⁶ He found this especially true when that religious language embodied American exceptionalism and universalism, which are meaningful to domestic audiences but hard to export, or when it was "joined to the national interest and pragmatic demands of the rest of the American foreign policy credo" (Sicherman 2007, 118). Sicherman (2007) concludes, "It should be clear that religion, insofar as its civil American religion is concerned, works primarily and best for American audiences" (118).

In their study of religious rhetoric in American populism, Rhys and Alexander (1994) found American civil religion is "generally is understood as a religious discourse that relates the nation to transcendent sources of meaning and destiny" and that it has

²⁵ Sociologist Robert Bellah coined the term "civil religion" in the late 1960s to describe a general, quasi-religious view of public life – "the religion of the republic," so to speak. It embodies a vague, complex public myth and symbolism found in all biblical faiths, but espouses no one faith in particular. Few debate civil religion exists, but they do debate whether it is a positive force (social glue for the country that legitimates national life) or a negative force (a tool used cynically in political rhetoric that includes hollow rituals during national celebrations and national grieving and, as used by fundamentalists, a type of religious nationalism). See http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/courses/ed253a/american_civil_religion.html for more definitions and further discussion.

²⁶ As Sicherman (2007) further points out, especially with regards to Bush and the Iraq War, "American exceptionalism and its universalism are in the end derived from a religious approach, but are not synonymous with religion itself. Meaningful to domestic audiences, this rhetoric is hard to export, especially when it encounters a 'religious religion' such as Islam. And such verbiage is even harder to sustain when joined to the national interest and pragmatic demands of the rest of the American foreign policy credo" (118).

priestly and prophetic orientations in that it celebrates and criticizes (4). They call civil religious language an elastic symbol that has a

transcendent moral standard and wide cultural resonance, ... without sectarian divisiveness ... It ties together understandings of God's will with national history and projects a mandate for rightly guided action onto all members of the national community (Rhys & Alexander 1994, 4).

Preston (2006) has noted the striking, continuing and integral role of religion in the formation, execution and justification of American foreign policy. But he also says the influence of religion in this process has been "relatively neglected and generally unrecognized" by diplomatic historians (784):

Independently, religion and foreign relations [we could just as easily substitute 'foreign policy'] are two of the most important and exhaustively studied aspects of American history. Religion has consistently been one of the dominant forces in shaping American culture, politics, economics and national identity. Indeed, the United States is the only major industrialized democracy where religion is as salient today as it was three centuries ago ... And yet, despite some specific exceptions, ... these two great disciplines are rarely, if ever, comprehensively or effectively bridged (Preston 2006, 786).

Pagels discusses the power of religious references by presidents, noting "many people think that religion is benign," but it can be "enormously divisive," "can reinforce divisions," "can demonize the opposition" and can "imply that anyone who is not Christian, much less evangelical, is not a real American" (Lawton 2003).

Richard Cizik of the National Association of Evangelicals says "Americans not only expect this language of their presidents, ... they respect it" because "this is a nation with a soul of a church." He says American presidents, who act as heads of state and leaders of a political party, have the function of priest or pastor, especially when it comes to trying to help a nation heal of its wounds. Cizik sees it as appropriate for presidents to

bring their theology to the issues and argues this is not necessarily a partisan act (Lawton 2003).

But for Professor Steve Tipton of Emory University, public emphasis on American civil religion may be more appropriate at certain times than at others. He says “one of the things that’s most revealing about religion in public or religious language and moral rhetoric from the public pulpit – and particularly from the presidential podium – is: what is the occasion?” (Lawton 2003).

Rhys and Alexander (1994) say religious rhetoric can provide a “politically legitimate vocabulary” for a president seeking to explain himself, mobilize adherents, persuade bystanders and neutralize opponents” (Rhys and Alexander 1994, 3). They say the ideological frames of religious rhetoric are “laced with symbols that resonate at affective levels” (1994, 3). Rhys and Alexander add that civil religion is “understood as a religious discourse” and has “justified imperialism, legitimated inequality and contributed to political quiescence” (4).

Populist religious discourse, Rhys & Alexander note, referred to the “United States’ place in a divine order and the social contract as a sacred covenant.” It “assumed that the nation’s religious heritage gives it a responsibility for moral action.” Populism’s religious rhetoric frames offered “coherent diagnoses of current societal evils [and] prescribed a better future society (Rhys & Alexander 1994, 13). “Thus, such discourse provided a way to interpret events, a central ideological frame, gave the movement legitimacy [and] provided adherents a language and a transcendent vision of a just society” (Rhys & Alexander 1994, 14).

Amy Tilton Jones found that President George H.W. Bush's speeches to religiously conservative audiences attempted to firm up his base by providing moral-religious justification for the first Gulf War (in Medhurst 2006). Rachel Martin Harlow demonstrates how Bush Sr. bridged the vast differences in culture and political power to defend U.S. involvement in the Persian Gulf War by framing the agents of war in opposing terms and thus polarizing the conflict (in Medhurst 2006). Harlow says Bush Sr.'s "god-term of leadership allowed Americans to take diplomatic and military initiative without appearing as controlling and belligerent as would otherwise have been the case" (in Medhurst 2006, 75).

The personal religious lives of presidents also can influence their worldview and therefore their rhetoric, as well as how their rhetoric is perceived. Bailey (2008) argues George W. Bush rhetorically achieved personal and political transformation before the electorate in his 2000 presidential campaign by rhetorically conforming his conversion to Christianity to the Pauline conversion narrative of the Bible²⁷, thus enabling Bush, among other things, to "create a sense of "consubstantiality" with evangelical Christians and to "declare his previous transgressions off limits for public scrutiny" (215). Indeed, Bailey (2008) says, "there is much to be learned about how religious elements, like the Pauline conversion form, inspire public policy initiatives and the rhetoric offered in support of them" (232).

Ivie (2007) sees in the Bush's war rhetoric on evil, in the "war on terror" and in the invasion of Iraq a "reframing [of] the question of national security into one of a chosen people's recurring quest for redemption," complete with a biblical "scapegoat."

²⁷ This conversion narrative, according to Bailey, includes a Transgression Phase, a Transformation Phase and a Commissioning Phase.

Ivie says Bush “spoke to a Christian America in the language of a Christian man crusading for a righteous cause by declaring an unrestricted war on evil” (223). He calls such “ritualized perceptions of peril” the “engine of unreflective policy making” (2007, 221). Ivie (2007) notes that Murphy has observed that Bush’s post-9/11 rhetorical world was “governed by theistic essence,” “filled with heroes and villains, divided by good and evil, and given purpose by God’s will, which was to be fulfilled by people of faith and character opposed to evil.” Noon has concluded that “Bush’s providential certainty” and “prophetic dualism” “supplanted critical thought with the righteous pursuit of ‘moral security’ against ‘evildoers’” (Ivie 2007, 223-4).

Bailey (2008) says the prominence of Bush’s Pauline conversion form in his electoral discourse, in which he claimed to be guided by a higher power, gave his discourse the prospect of rhetorical legitimacy for the 46 percent of Americans who claim to be born-again Christians. Even for those evangelical Christians who don’t agree with Bush’s aggressive response to 9/11 or the Iraq War, “Bush’s claims of waging war under divine sanction are more likely to resonate with them because of the prevalence of the Pauline form in the evangelical tradition” (233) and because the rhetorical framework of religious, political and moral certitude among religious voters that Bush established in his 2000 electoral rhetoric has remained in operation (Bailey 2008, 233). As proof, Bailey points out that 80 percent of religious Republicans continued to support the war in June 2007, compared to 40 percent of the general public. Bailey (2008) says

studies of Bush’s presidential rhetoric should acknowledge that the certitude it often manifests may appear, at least for those able to identify with Bush’s conversion experience, to be a reasonable extension of his divine call (233).

Unfortunately, similar studies of how Johnson's religious worldview and experience affected his public policy rhetoric are not easy to find. Dartmouth University visiting religious professor Randall Balmer, who has studied Johnson in terms of how he applied his teachings in religion to his political promises as president, says of Johnson, "His mother taught him that the strong have an obligation to care for the weak ... This explains why Lyndon Johnson pushed for civil rights at considerable political cost to himself. It also explains his Great Society ambitions" (Lim 2008).

In examining how faith shaped presidents from Kennedy to Bush, Balmer particularly focuses on politicization of religion, including the "soft religiosity" of Johnson's Great Society. Johnson, Balmer (2008) tells us, did not come from a clear religious lineage, but rather a mixture of influences from Baptist to Christadelphian (49-50). "Johnson himself, however, evinced little piety, and what little he showed during his long career of public life could be properly be called perfunctory, even performative" (2008, 51). As *Time* magazine put it, "Lyndon Johnson belongs to those whose beliefs were formed by inheritance" ("Johnson's Faith," 1964).

Preston (2006), in chronicling the influence of religion on the foreign policy of a number of presidents, concludes, "We need to know much more about how religion affected the foreign policies of other major figures of the twentieth century, such as... Lyndon Johnson..." (808). He cautioned that "if studies of religion and foreign relations are to have any impact on the field, they must ... be able to illustrate, to some degree, a relationship and cause and effect between religious matters and diplomatic events" (Preston 2006, 809).

Presidents seek to establish moral leadership through their rhetoric. One way they do this is to “preach, reminding the American people of religious and moral principles and urging them to conduct themselves in accord with these principles” (Hinckley 1990, 73).

Bostdorff (1994) found presidents appealed to revered ideals to rationalize the cost of human life, the depletion of the nation’s economic reserves and other sacrifices by “endowing them with a transcendent meaning” (210). She says “bloody military interventions apparently become more palatable to citizens, even heroic, when presidents can successfully imbue them with moral purpose” (1994, 210).

Hinckley (1990) found presidents frequently cited God, American founders and great presidents in their speeches (55). She argues that “presidents do not engage in political activity.” Rather

they engage in moral – and explicitly religious and moral principles [and urge people] to conduct themselves in accord with these principles. They lead prayers, quote from the Bible, and make theological statements about the Deity and His desires for the nation ... They are the moral leaders and high priests of the American society (Bostdorff 1990, 73-74).

Indeed, Hinckley (1990) says presidents are consciously cultivating this impression of themselves.

Hinckley (1990) also found presidential rhetoric from Truman through Nixon was replete with apocalyptic imagery. Thus,

Truman describes the international situation as a war between good and evil, lightness and dark, and Eisenhower sees the forces of good and evil massed and armed and opposed, as rarely before in history. Kennedy says that a trumpet summons us in mankind’s hour of maximum danger; Johnson prophesies that the hour and the day and the time are here; and Nixon announces the beginning of the third millennium (76).

Hinckley (1990) noted that “principles, virtues, and goodness are heard in almost every address. Decency, obligation, and duty are mentioned frequently” (76).

Hinckley (1990) found Republicans are somewhat more likely than Democrats to use religious references (78). She says some evidence suggests presidents believe in, and take seriously, their role of moral and religious leadership, pointing out a Kennedy adviser’s comment that “our presidents today have to be a personal model, a cultural articulator, and a semi-priest or semi-tribal leader” and that “it will be less important in years to come for presidents to work out programs and serve as administrators than it will be for presidents ... to serve as educational and psychic leaders.” She quotes a Nixon aide who said presidents must be a combination of “leading man, God, father, hero, pope, king” (1990, 78-79).

Religious symbolism is also important. Wilson (1979) says “the dynamics of American society have ... made the realm of religious symbols and language a primary means of establishing differentiation and claiming uniqueness, albeit in a way not threatening to national unity” (47).

Dante Germino calls the American public philosophy “theocentric,” or God-centered, and says that from the beginning presidents have emphasized God in their addresses. Hinckley says this tradition is part of a larger American emphasis on civil religion (a nation “under God”) that is apparent in its pledges, inscriptions and currency, including weekly prayer breakfasts in Congress. Thus, she says presidents “are expected to be moral leaders for a moral nation” and “the religious tradition has been heightened and institutionalized to become a major feature of the modern presidency” (Hinckley 1990, 79). As Germino puts it, “in the American public philosophy as expressed by

presidents throughout American history, ‘God has made ... America his chosen country’” (Hinckley 1990, 83; Germino 1984, 6).

Hinckley (1990) found presidents portrayed the nation as moral by saying the nation seeks peace and freedom in the world, symbolizes freedom, tries to lead other nations to freedom and by emphasizing, as Eisenhower put it, that destiny has laid upon the country the responsibility of the free world’s leadership. Hinckley also found presidents attributed morality to the nation through its supposed association with God, in that its mission of freedom has been given directly by God or the nation has at least received a divine blessing. Nixon associated the nation’s destiny with the will of God. Kennedy implied that the nation’s acts are God’s work. And Truman said God had set before the nation the greatest task in mankind’s history. Hinckley says Johnson merely said “the nation has been ‘allowed by God to seek greatness through its own work and spiritual strength’” (83).

Robertson (1980) summarizes:

The mission and the destiny were inherent in the Revolution: democratic government, equality, and individual pursuit of happiness were the legitimate inheritance of all mankind ... and Americans were charged by God (as His chosen people) to represent all mankind and to bring the blessings of His inheritance to the world (69).

So, Hinckley (1990) says, “the nation is moral because of its connection with the larger divine purpose” (84). Hinckley (1990) found that the modern presidents she studied were three times more likely than their predecessors to use religious words and phrases, stating the nation’s mission in the world in religious terms, whereas earlier presidents showed no consistency in doing so (116, 118).

Hinckley (1990) also found presidents justified the nation as moral by saying “it seeks no territory or personal aggrandizement as it pursues its world mission. It is altruistic and innocent of selfish ends” (84). She quotes Calvin Coolidge’s inaugural address of 1925 to emphasize how ingrained this philosophy has been:

America seeks no earthly empire built on blood or force. No ambition, no temptation, lures her to thought of foreign domination. The legions which she sends forth are armed, not with the sword, but with the cross. The higher state to which she seeks the allegiance of all mankind is not of human, but of divine origin. She cherishes no purpose save to merit the favor of Almighty God (1990, 87).

Blanchard (1978) says the idea that this country is not a bully provides us added ammunition when attacked:

We can strike all the more forcefully if we are provoked, that is, if we can believe that the other fellow started it ... The very fact that the other person strikes first releases us from all restraint. He becomes a ‘bad’ person (or nation), and it becomes acceptable for us to punish him (23-27).²⁸

Hinckley (1990) found the presidents she studied were more alike than unlike in “their willingness to act as moral leaders and tell the people what is the Divine Will in regard to administration proposals” and “to some extent, presidents are merely expressing what they believe the public wants to hear” (86).

In her analyses of the annual and inaugural addresses from George Washington through Bill Clinton, Shogan (2002) argues that “moral and religious rhetoric should not be viewed simply as a reflection of presidential character or as a fulfillment of American ‘civil religion,’ but as a strategic tool to enhance independent power and authority” (2002, iii).

²⁸ See also Margaret Mead in “And Keep Your Powder Dry” (New York: Morrow, 1965), 150, 151; and Gabriel Almond in “The People and Foreign Policy” (New York: Praeger, 1962), 69-72.

Presidential Policy Leadership Through Rhetoric

It is difficult to define presidential leadership. Rather, we tend to discuss the qualities of what we consider to be good leaders. There are various theories of leadership that can be applied to presidents. This study examines presidential leadership as exercised through communication, including rhetoric and images, rather than through policies, management, etc. Therefore, this is a selective look at the voluminous literature on leadership.

Presidents are the only institutional figures in American government with a national constituency. They are “potentially in a position to formulate timely and coherent policy responses to national problems” (Brodkin 1987, 573). As Kingdon says of the president, “No other single actor in the political system has quite the capability of the president to set agendas” (Kingdon 1984, 25). And they do this largely through their rhetoric.

Leading the public is at the core of the modern presidency: “Both politics and policy revolve around presidents’ attempts to garner public support, both for themselves and for their policies” (Edwards 2003, 4). Not only must the president earn public support, but he must actively take his case to the people – in a kind of permanent campaign to persuade or mobilize the citizenry (2003, 4, 5).

Freud (1921) said a leader must establish strong affective ties between himself and his followers, must be representative of the people and must be able to suggest a wide variety of beliefs, emotions and behaviors through ideas vividly expressed. He must be able to convey the importance of just and equal treatment. And his prestige is dependent upon success and lost in the event of failure.

There are various types of leaders described in the literature (transformational, transactional, etc.). However, these are not particularly relevant here as they do not seem to place high value upon rhetorical leadership. One of the chief ways presidents lead is through oratory, of which Winston Churchill said, “He who enjoys it wields a power more durable than that of a great king” (Edwards 2003, 5).

Both Freud (1921) and Hogg (2001) discuss the use of rhetoric and polemic to manipulate emotions and retain influence. Gardner (1995) particularly emphasizes that the central element of leadership is telling identity stories. Good leaders tell dynamic, unfolding stories “about themselves and their groups, about where they were coming from and where they were headed, about what was to be feared, struggled against, and dreamed about.” The leader and his followers are the “principal characters or heroes” (14).

Freud argued that leaders influence through words and ideas. Gardner (1995) sharpened this focus by “showing that the leader’s words and ideas generally focus on identity, inspiring and leading followers by providing a vision or story about where a group is going, and what needs to be done to get there” (Goethals 2005, 554).

Gardner (1995) says the stories of most successful political leaders revitalize themes that have been important to the group. Ronald Reagan, for example, revitalized a story of American goodness and greatness that had come unraveled during the administrations of his four immediate predecessors, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter.

Gardner (1995) also distinguishes between stories that are inclusive, telling about the common identities of many people, and exclusive stories, which emphasize the differences between in-groups and out-groups, and trumpet the virtues of the in-group

(Goethals 2005, 555), similar to antithetical appeals. Hogg (2001, 2003) describes leaders who seek to retain leadership by redefining the in-group prototype in a self-serving manner and whose stories are exclusionary (Goethals 2005, 555).

According to Goethals (2005),

followers thirst for leadership, they are highly suggestible by the ideas forcefully expressed and vividly embodied by a leader, they have strong emotional attachments to leaders ... Followers have leader schemas such that they expect leaders, particularly presidents, to be strong, active, and good (557).

Indeed, Bligh, Kohles and Meindl (2004) point out that “leadership is a function of leaders and followers embedded in a rich web of negotiated meaning and contextual variables” (562). Image through words and deeds is crucial for presidents, for instance, in gaining trust for their leadership. Edwards and Wayne (2003) note that “while engaging in these and other functions, presidents often make appeals to patriotism, traditions, and U.S. history (and its greatness) to move the public to support them, thus reminding people of their common interests. They also frequently invoke the names of revered leaders of the past who made difficult decisions on the basis of high principles” (133). Michael Deaver, Reagan’s public relations person, adds that “image is sometimes as useful as substance” (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 135).

In their attempt to lead the public by rhetoric, presidents try to speak directly to the people, rather than relying on the media as a filter. Thus they give in-person speeches and addresses in their attempt to “go public,” as Kernell (1997) puts it. When presidents go public, they often try to persuade citizens by simplifying complex, multidimensional public policy that is subject to widely different interpretations and opposing views. They use tools such as symbols and metaphors, which may tap into general values. They try to

relate widely held values to policy, events or their own performance, and show the public that their position lines up with perceived public values. In doing so, they try to influence the values the public uses to evaluate policy (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 128,129).

Ferejohn (1990) says:

leaders retain their hold on their positions by convincing others, citizens and potential challengers, that they are willing to undertake retaliatory actions that ... may not really be costly to them ... As long as followers are not sure that acts of leadership are costly, they won't find it worthwhile to challenge the politician's authority (10).

Bostdorff (1994) says presidents have put that tendency toward violence in the best possible light, insisting they and the country are peaceful and principled, that they are forced to act because of the instigation of others and out of dedication to American freedom. They characterize military interventions as unavoidable, imperative and as tests of national commitment (223).

Bostdorff (1994) refutes previous studies that have shown presidents rely heavily on scapegoating, victimage, portrayal of a wicked enemy and other antithetical appeals to rally citizens behind them and their policies, noting that Johnson, among others, rarely indulged in this. But those who do so focus on creating a diabolical villain who poses a great threat to the United States, most often a country but sometimes an individual (223-224). In the process, people of a particular nationality are portrayed as a monolithic bloc (Bostdorff 1994, 225).

Slotkin (1973) argues that Americans historically have treated violence as a means of regeneration, and Hale (1983) says "the American social order is based on the values of profit, conflict, competition, 'stand and fight,' etc." Presidents have merely internalized these values. Therefore, Hale argues, "modern presidents, when faced with a

perceived ‘crisis,’ have resorted to some type of violence, thinking it to be a demonstration of courage” (420).

We have discussed the moral role of presidents through their rhetoric. Hinckley (1990) calls them the “moral leaders and high priests of the American society” (73), the “cultural and religious leaders of the nation. They lead prayers, quote from the Bible, and urge their congregation to look to matters of the spirit” (Hinckley 1990, 132).

Hart (1994) says the longer a president is in power, the more he begins “to feel that his will and the Nation’s are isomorphic, that he has become America incarnate” (249-64). Hinckley (1990) confirms this with her study of modern presidents, noting fewer self-references. Her studies show there is a belief that “the president is a moral leader closely associated with God, who will articulate and unify the people around a national mission” (135).

War policy leadership through rhetoric has its own unique features. Presidents have the advantage of being the only elected officials with national constituencies (which empowers them) and of having a bully pulpit to wield that power. When it comes to foreign affairs, presidents have an added advantage as citizens put great trust in them in this area.

War is a foreign policy crisis, and presidents can establish leadership by invoking such a crisis. Crises can compel an issue onto an agenda if people believe there is a problem or preexisting perception. Bostdorff (1994) says “because foreign locales are so distant and knowledge of them is far removed from most Americans’ daily lives, presidents must persuasively advance claims of crisis in order to prompt public support for their crisis policies” (1).

We look to presidents especially during crisis, especially when they propose war. Presidents have a unique leadership opportunity to structure public perception during such times. Presidents seem to acknowledge that citizens want them to address crises fast, which is difficult in the case of terrorism and intractable wars. Barber (1974) notes that Americans want a president to be a “take-charge man, a turner of wheels, a producer of progress even if that means some sacrifice of serenity” (145). Edelman (1977) adds that citizens’ desire for “resolute action is even greater in a crisis (49).

Successful crisis promotion allows the president to increase his personal credibility, or supply of public goodwill, which he can draw upon during future policy decisions” (Bostdorff 1994, 8). Presidents then use crisis promotion to “accrue valuable symbolic reserves so that long after the successful resolution of a crisis, it may continue to serve as a powerful reminder of the nation’s triumph” (Bostdorff 1994, 8). Edelman (1964, 6) and Graber (1976, 289-321) call this a “condensational symbol” in the sense that presidents may refer to it again to “distribute symbolic reassurance” (Bostdorff 1994, 8). For instance, Bostdorff (1994) notes that two months after the Gulf of Tonkin incident, Johnson still referred to his “limited and fitting response” to reassure voters of his leadership intentions in Vietnam, building on his election campaign against Barry Goldwater in which he presented himself as a man of peace who used good judgment and restraint in the Tonkin crises. In this, Bostdorff says, Johnson “replenished his symbolic reserve for future use” (1994, 9).

However, Bostdorff (1994) is concerned presidents use crisis promotion to create an imperial presidency. She says “presidents have used foreign crises to accrue more power and, in turn, have relied on public and congressional acceptance of power

usurpation to promote more crises” (2). She says “presidents promote a sense of crisis whether they believe such an assertion is justified or whether they simply believe such an allegation is politically expedient” (1994, 2).

Bostdorff (1994) says presidents “today involve the nation in military intervention in other countries almost at will” (2). And she notes that “the relationship between power and discourse appears to be symbiotic” (1994, 234). For instance, “presidential rhetors [use] their discourse about foreign crises to ... [allow] them to expand their powers and to enhance their political standing” (Bostdorff 1994, 207). She found presidents “heightened the significance of each crisis scene when they depicted it as one that challenged American principles and proclaimed that the protection of these principles was a necessary goal of presidential crisis management” (1994, 210). Bostdorff (1994) concludes, “Commanders-in-chief have employed crisis promotion to accrue more power, and then used accumulated power to promote more crises” (14).

Conclusion

This review of the literature on presidential rhetoric (including problem definition in presidential rhetoric), policy typologies, the nature of political rhetoric, presidential rhetoric as a policy tool, the rhetorical presidency (including foreign crisis rhetoric, antithetical appeals, use of symbols, use of frames and religious rhetoric; moral leadership) and presidential policy leadership through rhetoric suggests it might be worth studying how presidents use rhetoric to define the need for war in similar and different ways.

The research shows that presidents have tremendous persuasion power when they wield the bully pulpit, especially on foreign crisis issues. How they rhetorically define the

problem frames their proposed solution to the problem as they see it. Their word choices (including antithetical word choices) and emphases, their narrative and causal stories (assignation of blame), their referential and condensational symbols, and their framing of the problem may even affect the neural circuitry of our brains (Lakoff 2008). Thus there is a manipulative element to presidential rhetoric.

Rhetorical problem definition by presidents may reinforce American myths of manifest destiny, buttressed by religious and moral rhetoric. And by virtue of their rhetorical power, especially in a foreign crisis, commanders-in-chief may discourage dissent through their rhetoric by implying that other interpretations evidence a lack of patriotism. As presidents classify the need for war policy, they tap into the social regulatory policy components of norms, values and moral codes of conduct. They engage in meaning selection. Their political rhetoric is full of validity claims that emphasize the moral rightness of their arguments. As a result, presidential rhetoric may enhance leadership and moral powers.

The following Data and Methods chapter explains the criteria for selecting data, the design of the research and the method used to analyze the speeches of Johnson and Bush (including grounded theory).

CHAPTER THREE – DATA, RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the characteristics of the data, the research design (including the research questions) and the methodology employed in this work. The data section includes a discussion of the speeches chosen for analysis; speech sources and selection criteria; and a list of the speeches, where they were given, the date they were given and their web addresses. The list is summarized in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. The research design section features a discussion of the theory upon which this work relies, the reasoning for comparing the Johnson and Bush speeches, research expectations, advantages and disadvantages of the research design, and problems and challenges related to the design. The methodology section discusses how the content of speeches was analyzed using the computer program, NVivo 7, the capabilities of the program, descriptive categories that arose from the data and methods used to measure the speeches.

The research questions are as follows:

- 1) How did these presidents use rhetoric to try to talk us into war?
- 2) How were their addresses similar and different in terms of the words and emphases they used?
- 3) How did they frame their causal stories in terms of who (or what) was to blame for the circumstances or events precipitating the war/conflict?

Data

Speeches Chosen For Analysis

The Johnson data consist of the president's pre-Vietnam-War-escalation speeches, from the day he was sworn into office after President Kennedy's assassination (November 22, 1963) to his major address at Johns Hopkins University of April 7, 1965.²⁹ His first address mentioning Vietnam was his state of the union address on November 27, 1963. The Bush data consist of the pre-Iraq-War speeches by the president from September 11, 2001 (commonly known as 9/11) until March 18, 2003, the day before the invasion of Iraq (American time). However, the last speech chosen that met the criteria was on March 17, 2003.

Speech Sources and Selection Criteria

The speeches were selected from a variety of sources, in both print and electronic format. Primary among them was the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, which is published by the U.S. Office of the Federal Register and is the official publication of U.S. presidents' public writings, addresses and remarks. The *Public Papers* are published in annual print volumes and online through the U.S. Government Printing Office (online versions are only available from 1991 forward).³⁰ They list the

²⁹ This research ends with the Hopkins speech rather than the Gulf of Tonkin incident (August 2 and 4, 1964) speech because Johnson did not make a consummate speech laying out why the United States was in Vietnam until the Hopkins address. In addition, just prior to that speech, on March 5, 1965, he had given orders for the commencement of Operation Rolling Thunder, which escalated the war. Historians have debated the authenticity of the Gulf of Tonkin incident, saying the administration's justification for retaliation "proved to be based largely on seriously flawed intelligence and possibly, according to some critics, manipulated" (Prados 2004).

³⁰ See <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/pubpapers/>

presidential addresses, radio and television broadcasts, speeches to Congress, short messages, news conferences, and speeches given on the road.³¹

All the print volumes for Johnson and Bush were manually examined to select speeches, then checked with various online sources. For each president, speeches were electronically loaded into NVivo from the online resources.

As there were no online *Public Papers* for Johnson, the online Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library and Museum³² was used to load electronic copy into NVivo. The online library only makes available selected speeches and messages, so the online *American Presidency Project*³³ also was used.

For Bush, the resources used were the online *Public Papers*, the White House web site archives and the online *American Presidency Project*. The latter two sources were used because at the beginning of the research, the online *Public Papers* version did not contain all the relevant Bush speeches. The online *Public Papers* provide the convenient Document Categories of “Addresses to the Nation” and “Addresses and Remarks,” which allow more easy selection of major addresses. For Bush, only highly topical speeches, especially (but not limited to) those listed under “Iraq” or “terrorism,” were selected from the “Addresses and Remarks” category.

³¹ “The public activity of presidents is listed in *The Public Papers of the Presidents* of the United States. *The Public Papers*, in annual volumes, lists all presidential addresses, radio and television broadcasts, speeches to Congress, short messages, news conferences, and speeches on the road. Typically, the format, subject, audience, time, and place are provided ... In short, the compilation provides a comprehensive and authoritative record of the president’s public and verbal activity, from George Washington to the present. This record is limited to actions that are presidentially defined and excludes the following categories: nonpublic actions, as in White House conversations, available only through the accounts of participants; actions by other officials – such as cabinet members or White House aides – taken in the name of the administration; and purely nonverbal appearances” (Hinckley 1990, 18). However, presidents included in the online *Public Papers* only date from 1991, meaning Johnson is not included.

³² See <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu>

³³ The American Presidency Project, established in 1999, is an online collaboration between John Woolley and Gerhard Peters at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Its archives contain 84,345 documents related to the study of the presidency. See <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/>

All speeches chosen for Johnson and Bush were delivered in person or were televised live.³⁴ Only one radio address was used, and that was for Johnson. For an address to be considered major, it had to be “a speech before a nationwide audience: inaugural addresses and nationally broadcast speeches to Congress and the American people” (Hinckley 1990, 19), or a speech that marked a significant milestone, substantively pertained to the war, was given to a prominent audience and may or may not have been broadcast, but may have gotten news coverage. As Johnson spoke sparingly of the Vietnam War, and often in the context of peace and foreign policy, the researcher’s inclination was to be more generous in including one of his speeches that might pertain to war, even if Johnson said little about the war or just seemed to allude to it generally, especially if it was a major speech within the time frame specified in this research. This was done for the sake of having enough comparative data in relation to the Bush speeches, as Bush spoke prolifically and specifically about the need for his war. Speeches to large interest groups (such as the AFL-CIO, conferences of U.S. attorneys, groups of lower level-officials, such as mayors, and large religious groups) were used, as were foreign addresses.

Minor speeches, such as those given to a special audience (Hinckley 1990, 19), were excluded. In their study of the impact of presidential speeches, Brace and Hinckley (1993) classified major speeches as “all live addresses televised to a national audience” (385). By inference, minor speeches are not necessarily live and not necessarily televised to a national audience.

³⁴ When this project was begun, some of the Bush speeches were not available from the online GPO *Public Papers of the Presidents*, where speeches are categorized and therefore easier to evaluate for importance to this work. It was therefore necessary to rely upon the White House web site, and now those links all connect to Spanish versions. Near the end of the project, there was much more online availability. Thus, as speeches were chosen at the beginning of this work, it was very much a judgment call as to what to include.

Also excluded were remarks pertaining to appointments and nominations, bill signings, communications to Congress, communications to federal agencies, directives, interviews with the news media, joint statements, letters and messages, meetings with foreign leaders and international officials, resignations and retirements, and statements by the president, all categories used by the Office of the Federal Register and the Government Printing Office in the print and online versions of the *Public Papers*.

Also excluded were introductions of new cabinet members and radio addresses, with the exception of one Johnson address used in this category, again for the sake of having enough comparative data in relation to the Bush speeches. Bush gave many radio addresses on the war and on terrorism, in addition to his abundance of other addresses, which were excluded. Campaign speeches and single-community speeches to relatively small groups (such as federal employees, corporations, etc.) were also excluded.

The criteria for using speeches was also based upon the amount of references to the war (with exceptions made for Johnson, as noted), the intended public nature of the speech, the news value of the speech (state of the union addresses, for instance, are highly publicized) and the importance of the venue. Using these criteria and what Neuendorf (2002) calls “immersion in the message pool” (in this case, reading all the speeches of the two presidents prior to the beginning or escalation of their wars), the researcher discovered which speeches it made sense to use for this study (72).

Thus, this research analyzes 29 Bush speeches and 16 Johnson speeches. The Johnson speeches totaled 1,084 inches of copy, and the Bush speeches totaled 1,167 inches of copy, as measured in the print version of the *Public Papers*, which standardizes line length. Although there was some difference in formatting the printed copy for the

two presidents, measurements were made to ensure that there was an equivalency so that each could be counted in the same way. The count was made by manually measuring the length of the copy in the *Public Papers* using a ruler. Only the copy of the speech and any included speech headings were measured, including the small amount of space preceding and following any headings. Neither the introductory information (name of speech, date delivered), nor the ending notations (when and where the speech was given and any supplementary information about the speech or its audience) was measured. Copy inches were rounded up or down to the .25 inch measure, depending on which was closest. The speeches were measured twice for reliability purposes.

List of Speeches

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 list the speeches that were chosen for Johnson and Bush, respectively, by president, name of the speech, locale of the speech, date of the speech and online source.

**Table 3.1. Pre War-Escalation Speeches by President Lyndon B. Johnson:
November 27, 1963 to April 7, 1965**

Name	Locale	Date	Web Address
1963			
(1) Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress	U.S. Capitol	11/27	http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/631127.asp
1964			
(2) Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union	U.S. Capitol	1/8	http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/640108.asp
(3) Remarks to the Legislative Conference of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO	Sheraton Park Hotel, Washington, D.C.	3/24	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26127&st=&st1=
(4) Remarks on Foreign Affairs at the Associated Press Luncheon	Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York City	4/20	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26168&st=&st1=
(5) Radio and Television Report to the American People Following Renewed Aggression in the Gulf of Tonkin*	Not Available	8/4	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26418&st=&st1=
(6) Remarks at Syracuse University on the Communist Challenge in Southeast Asia	New journalism building, Newhouse Communications Center, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York	8/5	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26419&st=&st1=

**Table 3.1 (continued). Pre War-Escalation Speeches by
President Lyndon B. Johnson:
November 27, 1963 to April 7, 1965**

Name	Locale	Date	Web Address
1964			
(7) Remarks Upon Signing Joint Resolution of the Maintenance of Peace and Security in Southeast Asia	East Room, The White House	8/10	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26429&st=&st1=
(8) Remarks Before the American Bar Association	New York City	8/12	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26434&st=&st1=
(9) Remarks at the Dedication of the Eufaula Dam	Eufala Lake, Oklahoma	9/25	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26528&st=&st1=
(10) Remarks to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association	Grand Ballroom, Carpenter Motor Inn, Manchester, New Hampshire	9/28	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26540&st=&st1=
(11) Remarks in Memorial Hall, Akron University	Memorial Hall, Akron, Ohio	10/21	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26635&st=&st1=
(12) Remarks at Lindbergh Field	Lindbergh Field, San Diego, California	10/28	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26683&st=&st1=
(13) Christmas Message to the Americans in Vietnam	Unknown	12/23	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26769&st=&st1=
1965			
(14) Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union	U.S. Capitol	1/4	http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/650104.asp

**Table 3.1 (continued). Pre War-Escalation Speeches by
President Lyndon B. Johnson:
November 27, 1963 to April 7, 1965**

Name	Locale	Date	Web Address
1965			
(15) Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic	East Room, The White House (to members of the U.S. House and Senate Appropriations, Foreign Relations & Armed Services Committees)	5/4	<i>http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=26938&st=&st1=</i>
(16) Address at Johns Hopkins University: "Peace Without Conquest"	Shriver Hall Auditorium, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland	4/7	<i>http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/650407.asp</i>

* Only radio address used.

**Table 3.2. Pre-War Speeches by President George W. Bush:
September 11, 2001 to March 17, 2003**

Name	Locale	Date	Web Address
2001			
(1) Remarks at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, on the Terrorist Attacks	Dougherty Center, Barksdale AFB	9/11	<i>http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1098&position=all</i>
(2) Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks	Oval Office, The White House	9/11	<i>http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1099&position=all</i>
(3) Remarks by the President While Touring Damage at the Pentagon	Site of the Attack, Arlington, Virginia	9/12	<i>http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1101&position=all</i>
(4) President's Remarks at the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Service	National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.	9/14	<i>http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1108&position=all</i>
(5) Remarks at the Islamic Center	Mosque, Washington, D.C.	9/17	<i>http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1121&position=all</i>
(6) Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11	House Chamber of the U.S. Capitol	9/20	<i>http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1140&position=all</i>
(7) Address to the Nation Announcing Strikes Against Al Qaida Training Camps and Taliban Military Installations in Afghanistan	Treaty Room, The White House	10/7	<i>http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1201&position=all</i>

**Table 3.2 (continued). Pre-War Speeches by President George W. Bush:
September 11, 2001 to March 17, 2003**

Name	Locale	Date	Web Address
2001			
(8) Remarks Announcing the Most Wanted Terrorists List	Bonaparte Auditorium, Federal Bureau of Investigation Headquarters	10/10	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1212&position=all
(9) Address to the Nation from Atlanta on Homeland Security	World Congress Center, Atlanta, Georgia	11/8	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1360&position=all
(10) Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly	New York City	11/10	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1375&position=all
(11) Remarks to the United States Attorneys Conference	Presidential Hall, Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C.	11/29	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1459&position=all
(12) Remarks Announcing Action Against Terrorist Financial Support Networks	Rose Garden, The White House	12/20	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2001_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1532&position=all
2002			
(13) Remarks at a Reserve Officers Association Luncheon	Ballroom, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.	1/23	http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=64180&st=Remarks+at+a+Reserve+Officers+Association+Luncheon&st1=35
(14) Remarks to United States Mayors and County Officials	East Room, The White House	1/24	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2002_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=110&position=all

³⁵ Available through the American Presidency Project; not available through *Public Papers* online.

**Table 3.2 (continued). Pre-War Speeches by President George W. Bush:
September 11, 2001 to March 17, 2003**

Name	Locale	Date	Web Address
2002			
(15) Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union	House Chamber, U.S. Capitol	1/29	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2002_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=129&position=all
(16) Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast	International Ballroom, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.	2/7	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2002_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=187&position=all
(17) Remarks on the Six-Month Anniversary of the September 11 th Attacks	South Lawn, The White House	3/11	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2002_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=374&position=all
(18) Address to the Nation on the Proposed Department of Homeland Security	Cross Hall, The White House	6/6	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2002_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=937&position=all
(19) Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11	Ellis Island, New York City	9/11	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2002_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1570&position=all
(20) Address to the United Nations General Assembly	General Assembly Hall at the United Nations Headquarters, New York City	9/12	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2002_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1572&position=all

**Table 3.2 (continued). Pre-War Speeches by President George W. Bush:
September 11, 2001 to March 17, 2003**

Name	Locale	Date	Web Address
2002			
(21) Address to the Nation on Iraq	Grand Rotunda, Cincinnati Museum Center, Union Terminal, Cincinnati, Ohio	10/7	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2002_public_papers_vol2_misc&page=1751&position=all
(22) Remarks on the Passage of a United Nations Security Council Resolution on Iraq	Rose Garden, The White House	11/8	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?position=all&page=2053&dbname=2002_public_papers_vol2_misc
2003			
(23) Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union	House Chamber, U.S. Capitol	1/28	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2003_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=82&position=all
(24) Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast	International Ballroom, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.	2/6	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2003_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=130&position=all
(25) Remarks on the Iraqi Regime's Noncompliance With United Nations Resolutions*	Roosevelt Room, The White House	2/6	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2003_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=135&position=all
(26) Remarks at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention	Presidential Ballroom, Opryland Hotel Nashville, Tennessee	2/10	http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030210-5.html , or http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2003_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=146&position=all

**Table 3.2 (continued). Pre-War Speeches by President George W. Bush:
September 11, 2001 to March 17, 2003**

Name	Locale	Date	Web Address
2003			
(27) Remarks to the National Governors Association Conference	State Dining Room, The White House	2/24	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2003_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=203&position=all
(28) Remarks to the American Enterprise Institute Annual Dinner ³⁶	International Ballroom, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.	2/26	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2003_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=216&position=all
(29) Address to the Nation on Iraq	Cross Hall, The White House	3/17	http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2003_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=277&position=all

* Videotaped for later broadcast.

Research Design

Using content analysis of the pre war-escalation speeches and the pre-war speeches of Johnson and Bush, the researcher employed content analysis to establish grounded theory about the words used most often by Johnson and Bush to define the need to escalate an ongoing war (Johnson) or begin a war (Bush).

Grounded theory is inductive, qualitative analysis using specific methods and systematic procedures (Glaser 2001, 200). It uses a set of coding procedures to provide standardization and rigor for the analysis (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 13). Grounded theory is built rather than tested (Patton, 2002, 127). The grounded theory paradigm provides researchers with analytical tools for handling large amounts of raw data and encourages

³⁶ Also called, “The President Discusses the Future of Iraq” in some versions.

them to consider alternative meanings of phenomena, while elucidating the concepts that make up the theory (Glaser 1993).

Grounded theory provides guidance for describing the data and conceptually ordering the data into discrete categories according to properties and dimensions. Immersion in the data and thick description helps elucidate the categories. Using grounded theory, one can theorize about the ideas and concepts in the data and formulate them into a logical, systematic and explanatory theme that corresponds to real-world phenomena. A good grounded theorist recognizes any tendency toward bias (Patton 1990; Strauss and Corbin 1998, 7, 21).

Although grounded theory does not recommend that the researcher state her expectations, expectations exist nevertheless in many cases. Yet bias and researcher expectations are not the same thing. Bias is defined by Patton (2002) as “distortion of data to serve the researcher’s vested interests and prejudices” and as setting out to “prove a particular perspective or manipulate the data to arrive as predisposed truths” (51). This never occurred in this study, so reference is made to expectations instead of bias. Patton (2002) acknowledges that, at least when dealing with qualitative data, “the ideals of absolute objectivity and value-free science are impossible to attain in practice and are of questionable desirability in the first place since they ignore the intrinsically social nature and human purposes of research” and because the “researcher is the instrument of both data collection and data interpretation” (50). Indeed, even asking the question indicates a bias, according to Patton.

To overcome bias, Patton (2002) recommends striving for what he calls *trustworthiness* and *authenticity*, expressed in terms of balance, fairness and

completeness (51). He further urges qualitative researchers to adopt a stance of “empathic neutrality,” a “middle ground between becoming too involved, which can cloud judgment, and remaining too distant, which can reduce understanding” (50). This “neutrality with regard to the phenomena under study” means that “the researcher does not set out to prove a particular perspective or manipulate the data to arrive at predisposed truths” (51). The researcher achieves neutrality, according to Patton (2002), by “carefully reflect[ing] on, deal[ing] with, and report[ing] potential sources of bias and error” through “systematic data collection procedures, rigorous training, multiple data sources, triangulation, external reviews, and other techniques,” which Patton (2002) says are designed to produce “high-quality qualitative data that are credible, trustworthy, authentic, balanced about the phenomena under study, and fair to the people studied” (51).

In this study, the researcher’s empathic neutrality was achieved by stating expectations up front, systematically collecting data based upon pre-set rules, applying training in qualitative analysis and grounded theory, studying two presidents and their numerous major speeches on war, using qualitative and quantitative analysis (triangulation of methods) and receiving external review of the research from a faculty dissertation committee. Further, this is a mixed-methods work, and the quantitative element of the study operates on a null hypothesis. In addition, the researcher reports results of tests confirming and disconfirming expectations. And finally, the researcher has retained a certain detachment because the study involves only the analysis of presidential speech text, meaning that the researcher spent no time in the field, nor did she have contact with human subjects. While this may exclude valuable data, such as the

environment in which the speeches were given, presidential expressions and voice emphasis (among other factors), personal attendance at the speeches was impossible, as it often is in content analysis. Thus, the study of text alone provides for detachment.

Grounded theory allows one to employ microanalysis, or line-by-line analysis, to generate categories and suggest relationships; theoretical sampling, or sampling of emerging concepts to explore how the properties of concepts vary; theoretical saturation, or development of categories to the point at which no new categories emerge; range of variability, or range of variation of a concept dimensionally along its properties; open coding, or identification of concepts, their properties and their dimensions in data; axial coding, or the relating of categories to their subcategories; and relational statements, or initial hunches about how concepts relate to hypotheses (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 57, 73, 101, 123, 135, 143). This study employed word-by-word analysis, memos, exhaustion of categories, in-depth exploration of concepts, detailed coding and hunches expressed in ongoing memos.

It was determined that Johnson and Bush were the best candidates for comparison of pre-war-escalation/pre-war speeches for the following reasons: First, each produced a body of rhetoric justifying war. Second, the two were relatively contemporary presidents. Third, their wars were comparable in that they were controversial, not inevitable and of significant duration. And fourth, these presidents came from different political parties. Of course, Johnson escalated American engagement, whereas Bush began a war pre-emptively.³⁷ In addition, Johnson said he was fighting a war on

³⁷ “U.S. engagement in Vietnam began small under President Eisenhower and grew under presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon before Congress ended it under President Ford,” according to Holt, P.M. 2005 (May 5). *Lessons We've Learned -- or Should Have -- in Vietnam*, Christian Science Monitor, 97 (113).

Communism, while Bush said he was fighting a war on terrorism. And Johnson inherited his war, while Bush began his. Studying at least two presidents provided points for comparison, which allowed for more meaningful conclusions about how presidents talk us into war.

The researcher's expectations were that Johnson would use fewer antithetical terms and would use less pronounced antithetical language than did Bush to define the need for war escalation/war initiation. Antithetical language is defined as language that is highly charged and provides contrasting descriptions of the qualities of the United States, its coalition, its enemy, the war, the plight of victims and job of citizens. It was also expected that Johnson would use less religious language and less hyper-patriotic language than Bush. These expectations existed because Bush's language was striking in these respects even before analysis began, and was noted as such by prominent others and the media. It was also expected that Bush's fundamentalist, neo-conservative background would prompt him to make more frequent use of religious language than Johnson and to see war as a messianic mission rather than as a secular policy choice. Again, this was because much had been written in advance of this research on Bush's religious background.³⁸

³⁸ A sampling of many such headlines includes a March 10, 2003, *Newsweek* cover titled "Bush & God," with subheads "How Faith Changed His Life and Shapes His Presidency" and "Why His 'God Talk' Worries Friends & Foes;" a *Sojourners Magazine* article on Bush titled "Dangerous Religion" (2003); an article by *The Progressive* titled "Bush's Messiah Complex" (2003); a Reuters' article titled "Bush Letter Cites 'Crusade' Against Terrorism" (2004); a *New York Times Magazine* article titled "Faith, Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush" (2004); and an article by the *Seattle Times* titled "'The Jesus Factor' and George W. Bush" (2004). I had also read Bush's biography, *A Charge to Keep*, which chronicled his combined political/religious journey. Indeed, Lawton (2003), who has observed that Bush's speeches frequently reflected his religious beliefs, says Bush works with a team of speechwriters headed by Michael Gerson, an evangelical Christian who studied theology at evangelical Wheaton College in Illinois. Professor Steve Tipton of Emory University says that while there is an effort by Gerson to use a unifying civil religious rhetoric that is not specific to denomination or faith tradition or that explicitly says "Christ Jesus," ... there are also "these evangelical resonances" (Lawton 2003).

Content Analysis

This study employs content analysis, which derives “numerical measures from a non-numerical written record” (Johnson and Joslyn 1995, 244). Content analysis enables researchers to “take a verbal, non-quantitative document and transform it into quantitative data” by constructing a “set of mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories that can be used to analyze documents, and then [recording] the frequency with which each of these categories is observed in the documents studied” (Johnson and Joslyn 1995, 244-45).

There are four steps in content analysis, according to Johnson and Joslyn (1995, 245-46): (1) deciding what sample of germane materials to include in the analysis, (2) defining the categories (and subcategories) of content to be measured so that it relates to the research topic and the measures are both valid and reliable, (3) choosing the recording unit, whether it be a word, a sentence, a paragraph, an item in its entirety, etc., based upon the ease of identification, the correspondence between the unit and the content categories (words may be more appropriate for measuring traits, for example), and the appropriate size of the unit for the research, and (4) devising a system of enumeration for the content being coded (including measurement of the presence or absence of a content category and the frequency with which a category appears).

A researcher usually can enhance the validity of content analysis by precisely explaining the procedures followed and by the content categories used. Reliability is best demonstrated by showing inter-coder reliability, where “two or more analysts, using the same procedures and definitions, agree on the content categories applied to the material analyzed. The more agreement, the stronger the researcher’s confidence can be that the meaning of the content is not heavily dependent on the particular person doing the

analysis. If different coders disagree frequently, then the content categories have not been defined with enough clarity and precision” (Johnson and Joslyn 1995, 246). As mentioned, the use of more than one coder was not practical for this study.

While political scientists have used content analysis sparingly, Johnson and Joslyn say it is “a useful technique in some areas of inquiry” (1995, 247).

Advantages/Disadvantages

This research design has certain advantages. Weber (1990) says that analysis of content has an advantage over data-generating and analysis techniques because it is unobtrusive, meaning neither the sender nor the receiver is aware they are being analyzed. Thus, the measurement itself does not confound the data. The design also has time limitations that make the quantity of material analyzed manageable. And the data is accessible. In addition, grounded theory allows one to generate in-depth and extensive data for analysis.

There are also some disadvantages. Some complain that thematic text analysis does not consider context, or that researchers make inferences that were not in the speaker’s mind (Stone in Roberts 1997, 37-38; Edwards and Wayne, 124). Others say that it is impossible to “surmise the intentions and context from which they were generated,” including the “sights, sounds, smells, intonations, and emotional tensions of the original event,” as well as the effects of lighting, makeup, stage settings, camera angles, clothing, pacing of delivery, predispositions of the audience, attentiveness of the audience, level of drama and other aspects involved with speech making (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 124; Stone in Roberts 1997, 37-38). However, Stone points out that “text can be daunting and complex enough without considering additional issues in evaluating

themes conveyed by the setting or nonverbal communications” (Edwards and Wayne 2003, 124; Stone in Roberts 1997, 37-38).

Potential Problems

Potential problems with the research design are that a single coder precludes inter-coder reliability checks, assurance of validity (that the study measures what it says it does), and accuracy (Patton 2002, 464-6, 556). It was highly impractical to do a joint-authored dissertation or employ another researcher. Consequently, the researcher relied upon double counts in final tallies to ensure reliability.

The challenge in coding Johnson’s speeches was that he tended toward obtuseness and often spoke generally about war (and its flipside, peace) and foreign policy. In few speeches did he approach Vietnam explicitly or in great detail. Rather, he might talk about Communism or security in general. For instance, the researcher chose to code the following excerpt from his “Remarks on Foreign Affairs at the Associated Press Luncheon” on April 20, 1964, even though he spoke generally about protection, world policy, territory acquisition, arming the nation, etc. It is difficult to determine if he is alluding to the Vietnam War:

To you serious and concerned men, who have gathered here at this luncheon, and ladies, I want to speak about the problems and the potentials that lie ahead and the great purpose to which you and I, and all Americans, must be dedicated ... The world has changed many times since General Washington counseled his new and weak country to ‘observe good faith and justice toward all nations.’ Great empires have risen and dissolved. Great heroes have made their entrances and have left the stage. And America has slowly, often reluctantly, grown to be a great power and a leading member of world society. So we seek today, as we did in Washington's time, to protect the life of our Nation, to preserve the liberty of our citizens, and to pursue the happiness of our people. This is the touchstone of our world policy. Thus, we seek to add no territory to our dominion, no satellites to our orbit, no slavish followers to our policies.

The most impressive witness to this restraint is that for a century our own frontiers have stood quiet and stood unarmed.

Another problem was deciding to whom a president was referring in a speech. For example, when Bush talked about “we,” as in “we are deliberate and patient,” did he mean the “royal we” of the presidency, the United States and its allies, or all? Also, who Bush called the “enemy” changed over time. This is where researcher judgment comes in.

While this is not a study that seeks to measure the ability of rhetoric to persuade or mobilize, it nevertheless assumes that presidents (and their staff) craft words as they do for these purposes. Perhaps presidents and scholars need to find better ways to measure exactly how (and/or if) rhetoric moves us.

Methodology

The computer analysis program NVivo, Version 7, was used to analyze, word-by-word, line-by-line, 16 pre-April 8, 1965, Johnson speeches and 29 pre-March 19, 2003, Bush speeches through content analysis.

The focus was on (1) how the problem was defined, including: (a) assignation of cause, blame, or responsibility for the problem, and (b) identification and description of the enemy; (2) mention of God and/or references to scripture, (3) patriotic references to positive qualities of the United States and its citizens, (4) references to history calling the United States and its allies to action, and (5) metaphors and symbols used.

Coding Software

NVivo 7 allowed the researcher to create various categories and sub-categories and then to code words under those categories/sub-categories (Strauss and Corbin 1998,

105, 115-6). *All words were coded under the sub-categories of the categories, not the large categories themselves.*

NVivo allowed the researcher to itemize the speeches being analyzed (Tables 3.1 and 3.2 are lists of the speeches itemized in NVivo), and it produced seven major categories across both presidencies in the course of coding speeches (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3. Descriptive Categories That Emerged From Johnson and Bush Pre-War-Escalation/Pre-War Speeches

Descriptive Categories for Johnson	Descriptive Categories for Bush
Characteristics of America	Characteristics of America
Characteristics of Coalition/Allies	Characteristics of Coalition/Allies
Characteristics of the Enemy	Characteristics of the Enemy
Characteristics of the President	Characteristics of the President
Characteristics of Victims	Characteristics of Victims
Characteristics of the War	Characteristics of the War
Job of Citizens	Job of Citizens

NVivo then allowed the researcher to create subcategories of words under these categories, as well as to total and compare the number of times these two presidents used these subcategory words in their pre-war/pre-escalation speeches. This study presents in detail these subcategories and the (up to) five most-used subcategory words used by the two presidents in each category in Chapters 4 (empirical findings on secular language) and 5 (empirical findings on religious language) (see Tables 4.1 and 5.1, respectively). Both the words and the categories chosen arose from grounded research.

A major challenge in this research was reducing the data to manageable form. This meant combining coded subcategories whenever possible or eliminating some

subcategories that had too few entries. In addition, some words seemed to fit under more than one category and subcategory.

NVivo allowed the researcher to establish the word as the recording unit. A word may be used more than once in a sentence and therefore must be counted for each use (in this case manually). NVivo also allowed the researcher to establish a system of enumeration; in this case, that involved counting the up to five words that appear most often in the subcategories of the categories, and then comparing each president's choice of words. The up to five most-used words by each president in each category illustrate the most prominent ways they defined the need for escalation/initiation of war and assigned causal blame for the problem.

The researcher then determined the frequency of these words by counting their use per page of presidential speech, relying upon the standardized column widths established in the *Public Papers*. A column inch of speech was used as the metric because the decimals were large enough to have meaning. The speeches for each president could be directly compared in length by ruler measurement (column widths and type size balanced out to be almost even). Therefore, the researcher could analyze the average use of the words per column inch of printed speech copy.

A determination was then made as to whether the proportional comparisons of the up to five most-used words, per category, by each president were statistically significant by using a statistical test for comparing two binomial proportions, thus producing a Z-score (Ott, 1988, 242). Where a category produced words used in common by both presidents, a Z-score was also produced for those words. The differences in column inches of speech between the two presidents (83 inches) were controlled for in the Z-

score. A Z-score was not used for tables calculating total use of key words in all categories (see Tables 4.1 and 5.1). Nor was a Z-score given when comparisons of binomial proportions did not pass the necessary test for the normal approximation of significance to hold for both populations (the first example of this may be seen in Table 5.3).

A word may be coded twice. For instance, when Bush spoke to the nation's governors on February 24, 2003, he said, "As leaders, our job is to remind the American people [of] that – of the reality of the dangers we face, and do everything we can to prevent attack." "Leaders" was coded under Coalition and under President because it seemed to refer to both. However, only an estimated five percent of words were coded under more than one category.

Chapters 4 and 5 examine the empirical findings on secular language and inherently religious language, respectively.

CHAPTER FOUR – EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ON SECULAR LANGUAGE

Introduction

When President Johnson defined the need to escalate the war in Vietnam and President Bush defined the need to go to war in Iraq, they generated numerous key terms in their speeches to make their case. This study has had as its goal the examination of their speeches to discern and code the up to five most-used key words in multiple categories that arose from grounded research (the data talking to the researcher). It has done so through qualitative content analysis, using the program NVivo 7, in which the speeches were analyzed one-by-one, line-by-line, word-by-word. It also has been done through quantitative analysis, in which the key words were manually counted (with the assistance of NVivo) and the length of the speeches manually measured in *The Public Papers of the Presidents*.

The goal has been to compare how these presidents tried to talk us into war by employing the same or different key words, how many times they repeated these key words (again, comparatively) and how they employed problem definition by probability statement – discussed in detail in Chapter 6 – to argue for war.

This chapter examines the findings of these qualitative and quantitative analyses by first summarizing which secular key words these two presidents used the most in the main definitional categories, America, the Coalition, the Enemy, the Job of President, the Victims, the War and the Job of Citizens. Manual counts were done twice by the

researcher to help provide reliability to the findings, given that it was only realistic to have one tabulator for this study.

The key words are predominantly nouns, but in some cases are adjectives, verbs or adverbs. The choice depended upon how important the word seemed to be as an attribute of the category, in addition to how often it was used.

The empirical findings are first summarized in tabular form, then the tabular information is explained textually and then the use of the key words is illustrated in the context of the presidential speeches. For instance, “*Category: America*” begins with a table summarizing comparatively the up to five key words used by each president to define America, one of the categories that arose from grounded research. This is followed by an explanation of what is presented in the table, including what key words the presidents may have shared. This is then followed by examples from the speeches of each president’s key words used in context, with all of Johnson key words for that category examined first and all of Bush’s key words for that category examined second. For each key word in context, there is a subhead. So, for example, the reader will see *Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define America: “Strength”* or *Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Enemy: “Terrorist.”*

The tabular and textual summaries also include the proportion of the time the key word was used per column inch of each president’s total column inches of speech, the total inches having been manually measured in the *Public Papers of the Presidents*. It was possible to compare the inch length of these speeches in the *Public Papers* simply by employing a ruler count because the type size, type faces and column inch widths were virtually identical (or slight differences in one aspect were compensated for by another

aspect), given the standardization of the papers. A summary Z-score reflects this key-word-per-inch use and shows whether or not there was a statistically significant difference in word use by Johnson and Bush.

Patton (2002) tells us that qualitative data can be organized and reported via sensitizing concepts, or categories that the researcher brings to the data. Thus, this chapter summarizes the data as discussed above to illustrate the rhetorical similarities and differences employed by each president to make the case for war.

The Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

Comparative Summary of Total Findings

As expected, Johnson used far fewer key terms overall to define the problem and therefore the need for war. Johnson used almost half as many, even given the fact that he had only 83 fewer inches of column inches of speech than Bush (1,084 to Bush's 1,167).

Johnson used a total of 721 key terms in all seven categories in 16 speeches (half as many speeches as Bush) to define America, the Coalition, the Enemy, the Job of President, the Victims, the War and the Job of Citizens, while Bush used a total of 1,379 terms in all categories in 29 speeches (see Table 4.1).

Johnson used the fewest words in all categories to define the Job of Citizens (12, compared to Bush's 28). Johnson used the most terms in all categories to define War, but still less than Bush (203 to Bush's 271). However, Johnson did surpass Bush in his total use of words in all categories used to describe the Job of President (87 to Bush's 60).

Bush used the least words to describe the Job of Citizens (28). He used the most words to define the Enemy (541 to Johnson's 143). Additional comparisons may be seen in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1. Total of Five-Most-Used Defining Words
In Each Category By Johnson and by Bush**

Category	Johnson	Bush
America	104	169
Coalition	83	212
Enemy	143	541
Job of President	87	60
Victims	89	96
War	203	271
Job of Citizens	12	28
TOTAL	721	1,379

In the following section, the five most-used defining words by each president in each of these categories are explored. In addition, some examples of these words, used in context in the presidential speeches, are provided. For simplicity sake, reference is made only to the first variation of the word used.

Category: America.

Table 4.2 reports the data for this category.

**Table 4.2. Five Most-Used Words by Presidents Johnson
And Bush to Define America**

Johnson		Bush		
Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.	Z-Score
strength(en)(strong)	29	home(land)(front)	50	N/A
free(ly)(dom)	23	free(dom)(freedom's)(freedom's)	36	-1.49 (free)
world	19	nation(al)(nation's)	31	N/A
power(s)(ful)	18	great(ness)	27	N/A
nation(s)(al)	15	resolve(d)(resolute)	25	-2.24* (nation)
TOTAL	104		169	-3.55**

*sig. at p<.05; **sig. at p<.01.

Note: Test is the difference between two binomial proportions. In the body of the table, I am only comparing words shared by each president that are significant. In this case, that only involves comparing Johnson's use of the word "nation" (and its variants) with Bush's use of the word "nation," as indicated by the bracketed word in the Z-score column, and the total use of words by each president to define America. Only those that are significant are indicated by asterisks. This is done in this way in this table (and in all the relevant tables following in each chapter) because shared words do not necessarily appear on the same line if they are not used in the same proportions by each president. In this case, "free," and its variants had a Z-score of (-1.49), which was not significant and so not indicated. Additionally, while the word "world" may seem like an odd term to code as defining America, it was chosen because it seemed to be an attempt to distinguish America, which is described as part of the civilized world, from the Enemy, which is described as an outcast, uncivilized entity.

Summary. Based upon the test of binomial proportions employed to examine the two presidents' five most-used terms, the results indicate that Bush was much more likely than Johnson to use terms in total to define America, and among the two presidents' shared terms, Bush was more likely to use the term "nation."

When it came to the five-most used terms defining America, Johnson used 104 key terms to Bush's 169. In his 16 pre-war-escalation speeches, the five most-used terms he employed to define America were "strength," and its variations "strengthen" and "strong" used 29 times; "free," and its variations "freely" and "freedom," used 23 times; "world," used 19 times; "power," and its variations "powers" and "powerful," used 18 times; and "nation," and its variations "nations" and "national," used 15 times.

In contrast, in the 29 pre-war speeches given by Bush, the five terms he used most to define America were “home,” and its variations “homeland” and “homefront,” used 50 times; “free,” and its variations “freedom,” “freedoms” and “freedom’s,” used 36 times; “nation,” and its variations “national” and “nation’s,” used 31 times; “great,” and its variation “greatness,” used 27 times; and “resolve,” and its variations “resolved” and “resolute,” used 25 times.

“Free” and its variations, and “nation” and its variations, were used by both presidents, with “free” in second place for both. The presidents were distinguished from each other by their use of the terms “strength,” “world,” “power” (Johnson) and “home,” “great” and “resolve” (Bush). The following are examples of these key words in context:

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define America:

“*Strength.*” Johnson uses “strength” to refer to America as follows: “We have more strength than any other nation, more strength than all nations put together, and we are going to keep it” (Remarks in Memorial Hall, Akron University, October 21, 1964); and “You are in Viet-Nam, far from the places and people you love, because the forces that have given our Nation strength and wealth have also placed upon it the burden of defending freedom – even in remote and distant villages” (Christmas Message to the Americans in Viet-Nam, December 23, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define America: “Free.”

Johnson’s use of “free” is illustrated by the following: “But we have also learned in this century, and we have learned it at painful and bloody cost, that our own freedom depends upon the freedom of others, that our own protection requires that we help protect others, that we draw increased strength from the strength of others” (Remarks on Foreign Affairs

at the Associated Press Luncheon, April 20, 1964) and “There are those who wonder why we have a responsibility there. Well, we have it there for the same reason that we have a responsibility for the defense of Europe. World War II was fought in both Europe and Asia, and when it ended we found ourselves with continued responsibility for the defense of freedom” (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define America: “World.”

In defining America, Johnson referred to the “world” as follows: “In Viet-Nam, in Cyprus, and in every continent, in a hundred different ways America’s efforts are directed toward world order” (Remarks in New York City Before the American Bar Association, August 12, 1964) and “And we must let the rest of the world know that we speak softly, we carry a big stick, but we have the will and the determination, and if they ever hit us it is not going to stop us – we are just going to keep coming” (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define America: “Power.”

Johnson defined “power” as it relates to America to include: “We are the most powerful of all nations – we must strive also to be the most responsible of nations” (Remarks Upon Signing Joint Resolution on the Maintenance of Peace and Security in Southeast Asia, August 10, 1964) and “There are those who ask why this responsibility should be ours. The answer, I think, is simple. There is no one else who can do the job. Our power alone in the final test can stand between expanding communism and independent Asian nations” (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define America: “Nation.”

Johnson used “nation” in the following ways to define America: “Our Nation was created to help strike away the chains of ignorance and misery and tyranny wherever they keep man less than God means him to be” (Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 4, 1965) and “We have more strength than any other nation, more strength than all nations put together, and we are going to keep it” (Remarks in Memorial Hall, Akron University, October 21, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define America: “Homeland.”

A sampling of Bush quotes defining America included the following for the most used, “homeland”: “They have attacked America because we are freedom’s home and defender” (President’s Remarks at the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Service, September 14, 2001) and “During the next few minutes, I want to update you on the progress we are making in our war against terror and to propose sweeping changes that will strengthen our homeland against the ongoing threat of terrorist attacks. The first and best way to secure America’s homeland is to attack the enemy where he hides and plans, and we’re doing just that” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, June 6, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define America: “Free.”

Bush’s second-most used term to describe America is “free,” as in these examples: “America was targeted for attack because we’re the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining” (Address to the Nation on Terrorist Attacks, September 11, 2001) and “Americans are a free people, who know that freedom is the right of every person and the future of every nation. The liberty

we prize is not America's gift to the world, it is God's gift to humanity" (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003).

Examples of Key Words in Context Used by Bush to Define America: "Nation."

Bush's third-most-used term to describe America was "nation," as in the following examples: "I like to remind people that the evil ones have roused a mighty nation, and they will pay a serious price" (Remarks to the United States Attorneys Conference, November 29, 2001) and "This Nation is peaceful, but fierce when stirred to anger" (President's Remarks to the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Service, September 14, 2001).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define America: "Great."

Bush's fourth-most used word to describe America was "great," as sampled here: "The resolve of our great Nation is being tested. But make no mistake: We will show the world that we will pass this test" (Remarks at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, September 11, 2001); "A great people has been moved to defend a great nation" (Address to the Nation on Terrorist Attacks, September 11, 2001); "They didn't understand that when you attack America and you murder innocent people, we're coming after you with full force and fury of a great nation and our allies" (Remarks to United States Mayors and County Officials, January 24, 2002); and "History has placed a great challenge before us: Will America, with our unique position and power, blink in the face of terror, or will we lead to a freer, more civilized world? There's only one answer: This great country will lead the world to safety, security, peace, and freedom" (Address to the Nation on the Proposed Department of Homeland Security, June 6, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define America: “Resolve.”

Finally, Bush used the word “resolve” to describe America in the following examples: “These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve” (Address to the Nation on Terrorist Attacks, September 11, 2001); “The American people have responded magnificently, with courage and compassion, strength and resolve” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002); and “Americans are a resolute people who have risen to every test of our time” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003).

*Category: Coalition*³⁹

Table 4.3 reports the data for this category.

Table 4.3. Five Most-Used Words By Presidents Johnson and Bush to Define the Coalition

Johnson		Bush		
Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.	Z-Score
Congress	24	United Nations (U.N.)	66	N/A
United Nations	18	security	52	-5.00** (U.N.)
world	16	nation(s)	35	-5.79** (world)
friend(s)(ly)(ship)	14	world (world’s)	33	N/A
ally (allies)	11	ally (allies)	26	-2.26* (ally)
TOTAL	83	TOTAL	212	-7.45**

*sig. at p<.05; **sig. at p<.01

Note: Test is the difference between two binomial proportions.

Summary. Based upon the test of binomial proportions employed to examine the two presidents’ five most-used terms, the results indicate that Bush was much more likely than Johnson to use terms in total to define the Coalition and to use the terms “United Nations,” “world” and “ally” (and their variations) in doing so. Johnson used 83 key

³⁹ Through grounded research, the Coalition evolved to include Congress, world leaders and their citizens, regions, the United Nations and other world bodies.

terms, compared to Bush's use of 212. In his 16 pre-escalation speeches, the five terms used most by Johnson to define the Coalition were "Congress," used 24 times; "United Nations," used 18 times; "world," used 16 times; "friend," and its variations "friends," "friendly" and "friendship," used 14 times; and "ally," and its variation "allies," used 11 times.

Bush, on the other hand, in his 29 speeches, used the following five words most often to define the Coalition: "United Nations," and its variation "U.N.," used 66 times; "security," used 52 times; "nation," and its variation "nation," used 35 times; "world," and its variation "world's," used 33 times; and "ally," and its variation "allies," used 26 times.

Both presidents used the terms "United Nations," with Johnson giving it secondary importance and Bush giving it primary importance. Both also used "world," with Johnson giving it slightly more importance than Bush. Finally, both used the word "ally," giving it the same level of importance even if not saying it the same amount of times.

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Coalition:
"Congress." Johnson described the Coalition using the word "Congress" the most, as in these examples: "So I ask you now in the Congress and in the country to join with me in expressing and fulfilling that faith in working for a nation, a nation that is free from want and a world that is free from hate – a world of peace and justice, and freedom and abundance, for our time and for all time to come" (Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union, January 8, 1964) and "For each Member of Congress who supports this request is voting to continue our effort to try to halt Communist aggression. Each is

saying that the Congress and the President stand before the world in joint determination that the independence of South Viet-Nam shall be preserved and that Communist conquest shall not succeed” (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Coalition:

“*United Nations.*” Johnson’s second most-used key term in referring to the Coalition is the “United Nations,” as illustrated in these examples from his speeches: “The rulers in Hanoi are urged on by Peking. This is a regime which has destroyed freedom in Tibet, which has attacked India, and has been condemned by the United Nations for aggression in Korea” (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965) and “From this chamber of representative government, let all the world know and none misunderstand that I rededicate this Government to the unswerving support of the United Nations, to the honorable and determined execution of our commitments to our allies, to the maintenance of military strength second to none ...” (Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, November 27, 1963).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Coalition:

“*World.*” The third most-used term by Johnson to refer to the Coalition was “world,” as in the following examples: “We would hope that you could thoroughly and carefully consider it and with a minimum of division and discord say to the rest of the world that we are going to spend every dollar, we are going to take every action, we are going to walk the last mile in order to see that peace is restored, that the people of not only the Dominican Republic but South Viet-Nam have the right of self-determination and that

they cannot be gobbled up in the 20th century and swallowed just because they happen to be smaller than some of those whose boundaries adjoin them” (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965) and “The government of North Viet-Nam is today flouting the will of the world for peace” (Remarks at Syracuse University on the Communist Challenge in Southeast Asia, August 5, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Coalition:

“*Friend.*” The fourth most-used term by Johnson to define the Coalition was “friend,” as shown in these examples: “Thus, to allies we are the most dependable and enduring of friends, for our own safety depends upon the strength of that friendship” (Remarks on Foreign Affairs at the Association Press Luncheon, April 20, 1964) and “Peace requires that we and all our friends stand firm against the present aggressions of the government of North Viet-Nam” (Remarks at Syracuse University on the Communist Challenge in Southeast Asia, August 5, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Coalition:

“*Ally.*” Finally, Johnson used the term “ally” to define the Coalition, as in these examples: “We have shown that we can also be a formidable foe to those who reject the path of peace and those who seek to impose upon us or our allies the yoke of tyranny” (Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, November 27, 1963) and “Finally, we must develop with our allies new means of bridging the gap between the East and the West, facing danger boldly wherever danger exists, but being equally bold in our search for new agreements which can enlarge the hopes of all, while violating the interests of none” (Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union, January 8, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Coalition: “United Nations.” Bush referred most frequently to the “United Nations” in defining the Coalition in his pre-war speeches, as shown by these examples: “Every civilized nation here today is resolved to keep the most basic commitment of civilization: We will defend ourselves and our future against terror and lawless violence. The United Nations was founded in this cause” (Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly, November 10, 2001) and “In one place – in one regime – we find all these dangers, in their most lethal and aggressive forms, exactly the kind of aggressive threat the United Nations was born to confront. Iraq has answered a decade of U.N. demands with a decade of defiance. All the world now faces a test, and the United Nations a difficult and defining moment. Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant? The United States helped found the United Nations” (Address to the United Nations General Assembly, September 12, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Coalition: “*Security.*” Bush referred to “security” the second most times in defining the Coalition, as typified in these examples: “America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism” (Address to the Nation on Terrorist Attacks, September 11, 2001) and “Above all, our principles and our security are challenged today by outlaw groups and regimes that accept no law of morality and have no limit to their violent ambitions” (Address to the United Nations General Assembly, September 12, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Coalition: “*Nation.*” Bush used the word “nation” the third most frequently to define the Coalition,

as demonstrated in these examples: “We are joined by a great coalition of nations to rid the world of terror” (Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 11, 2002) and “The United States, along with a growing coalition of nations, is resolved to take whatever action is necessary to defend ourselves and disarm the Iraqi regime” (Remarks on the Iraqi Regime’s Noncompliance With United Nations Resolutions, February 6, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Coalition: “World.”

The fourth-most term used by Bush to define the Coalition was “world,” as shown in these examples from his speeches: “America encourages and expects governments everywhere to help remove the terrorist parasites that threaten their own countries and peace of the world” (Remarks on the Six-Month Anniversary of the September 11th Attacks, March 11, 2002); “The world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations do not breed the ideologies of murder” (Remarks to the American Enterprise Institute Annual Dinner, February 26, 2003); and “Saddam Hussein’s refusal to comply with the demands of the civilized world is a threat to peace, and it’s a threat to stability. It’s a threat to the security of our country. It’s a threat to the security of peace loving – peace-loving people everywhere” (Remarks to the National Governors Association Conference, February 24, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Coalition: “Ally.”

Finally, Bush used the term “ally” frequently to define the Coalition, as demonstrated here: “No group or nation should mistake Americans’ intentions: Where terrorist groups exist of global reach, the United States and our friends and allies will seek it out, and we will destroy it” (Address to the Nation From Atlanta on Homeland Security, November 8,

2001) and “We will plan carefully; we will act with the full power of the United States military; we will act with allies at our side, and we will prevail” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, October 10, 2002).

Category: Enemy

Table 4.4 reports the data for this category.

Table 4.4. Five Most-Used Words By Presidents Johnson and Bush To Define the Enemy

Johnson		Bush		
Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.	Z-Score
aggression(s)(aggressor)	58	terror(ism)(ist)	317	N/A
(aggressors)(aggressive)		(ists)(ize)		
Communism (Communist)	34	threat(s)(en)	109	N/A
(Communists)		(ens)(ening)(ened)		
attack(ed)(ing)(s)	28	murder(ered)(erer)	44	N/A
		(erers)(ous)		
North Viet-Nam	12	evil(doers)	37	N/A
adversary (adversaries)	11	kill(ed)(ers)(ing)	34	N/A
TOTAL	143		541	-17.47*

**sig. at $p < .01$

Note: Test is the difference between two binomial proportions.

Summary. Based upon the test of binomial proportions employed to examine the two presidents’ five most-used terms, the results indicate that Bush was much more likely than Johnson to use terms to define the Enemy. The two presidents shared no terms in common in defining this category.

Johnson used 143 key terms to define the Enemy, while Bush used 540. In his 16 pre-war-escalation speeches, the five terms used most by Johnson to define the Enemy are “aggression,” and its variations “aggressions,” “aggressor,” “aggressors” and “aggressive,” used 58 times; “Communism,” and its variations “Communist” and

“communists,” used 34 times; “attack,” and its variations “attacked,” “attacking” and “attacks,” used 28 times; “North Viet-Nam,” used 12 times; and “adversary,” and its variation “adversaries,” used 11 times. Johnson’s use of softer and more dated words such as “aggressor” and “adversary” seem to hark back to the language of a gentlemanly duel.

Bush used much stronger antithetical language than Johnson in his 29 speeches to refer to the Enemy. Indeed, this was clearly a category in which Bush expressed himself passionately. The five words he used the most are “terror,” and its variants “terrorism,” “terrorist,” “terrorists” and “terrorize,” used 317 times, used overwhelmingly more than any other term in this study; “threat,” and its variants “threats,” “threaten,” “threatens,” “threatening” and “threatened,” used 108 times; “murder,” and its variations “murdered,” “murderer,” “murderers” and “murderous,” used 44 times; “evil,” and its biblical variant, “evildoer,” used 37 times; and “kill,” and its variations “killed,” “killers” and “killing,” used 34.⁴⁰

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Enemy:

“Aggression.” Examples of how Johnson defines the Enemy using his most frequently used term, “aggression,” are as follows: “In Asia, Communism wears a more aggressive face. We see that in Viet-Nam. Why are we there? We are there, first, because a friendly nation has asked us for help against the Communist aggression.” (Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 4, 1965); “This is a regime which has destroyed freedom in Tibet, which has attacked India, and has been condemned by the United Nations for aggression in Korea” (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7,

⁴⁰ Notably, Bush went even to greater extremes in words that did not make it into his most-used category, including describing the Enemy as Mafia-like, parasites, torturers (even of children), rapists and wielders of weapons of mass destruction. He even describes Saddam Hussein as a student of Stalin.

1965); and “This is not the same kind of aggression which the world has long been used to. Instead of the sweep of invading armies there is the steady and the deadly attack in the night by guerrilla bands that come without warning, that kill people while they sleep” (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Enemy:

“*Communism.*” Johnson also defined the Enemy using his second-most preferred term, “Communism,” as shown in these examples: “Third, we have worked for the revival of strength among our allies, initially, to oppose Communist encroachment on war weakened nations; in the long run, because our own future rests on the vitality and the unity of the Western society to which we belong” (Remarks on Foreign Affairs at the Associated Press Luncheon, April 20, 1964) and “But the United States cannot and must not and will not turn aside and allow the freedom of a brave people to be handed over to Communist tyranny. This alternative is strategically unwise, we think, and it is morally unthinkable” (Remarks in New York City Before the American Bar Association, August 12, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Enemy:

“*Attack.*” Johnson’s third-most preferred term to define the Enemy was “attack,” and these are some examples of what he said: “On August 2 the United States destroyer Maddox was attacked on the high seas in the Gulf of Tonkin by hostile vessels of the Government of North Viet-Nam” (Remarks at Syracuse University on the Communist Challenge in Southeast Asia, August 5, 1964) and “Since the end of World War II, America has been found wherever freedom was under attack, or wherever world peace

was threatened” (Remarks in New York City Before the American Bar Association, August 12, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Enemy: “North Viet-Nam.” Johnson next used “North Viet-Nam” the most to describe the Enemy, as follows: “For 10 years three American Presidents-President Eisenhower, President Kennedy, and your present President – and the American people have been actively concerned with threats to the peace and security of the peoples of southeast Asia from the Communist government of North Viet-Nam” and “South Viet-Nam has been attacked by North Viet-Nam. It has asked our help. We are giving that help; we are giving it because of our commitments, because of our principles, and because we believe that our national interest demands it” (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Enemy: “Adversary.” Finally, Johnson used the term “adversary” to define the Enemy, as in these examples: “Now, what has come from that? Tonight we have more than twice as many bombers that can be put over our adversaries’ land than they can put over ours” (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964) and “We destroy bridges that are made up of steel and concrete and bleed little blood, so it is harder for our adversaries to convey their instruments of war from the north to the south” (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 5, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Enemy: “Terror.”

Bush’s focus was primarily on “terror” to define the Enemy, which was his largest category of all: “The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That’s not what Islam is all about. Islam is peace. These terrorists don’t represent peace. They represent evil and war” (Remarks at the Islamic Center of Washington, September 17, 2001). He also said, “Al Qaida is to terror what the Mafia is to crime,” and:

We value life; the terrorists ruthlessly destroy it. We value education; the terrorists do not believe women should be educated or should have health care or should leave their homes. We value the right to speak our minds; for the terrorists, free expression can be grounds for execution (Address to the Nation from Atlanta on Homeland Security, November 8, 2001).

More examples of the key word “terror” include “The dictator of Iraq is a student of Stalin, using murder as a tool of terror and control, within his own cabinet, within his own army, and even within his own family” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, October 7, 2002); and finally this:

The passing of Saddam Hussein’s regime will deprive terrorist networks of a wealthy patron that pays for terrorist training, and offers rewards to families of suicide bombers. And other regimes will be given a clear warning that support for terror will not be tolerated (Remarks to the American Enterprise Institute Annual Dinner, February 26, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Enemy: “Threat.”

“Threat” was Bush’s second-most used term to define the Enemy, as in these examples: “States like these and their terrorist allies constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002); “At the same time, every nation in our coalition must take seriously the growing threat of terror on a catastrophic scale, terror armed with biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons” (Remarks on the Six-Month Anniversary of

the September 11th Attacks, March 11, 2002); “And we will not allow any terrorist or tyrant to threaten civilization with weapons of mass murder” (Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 11, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Enemy: “Murder.”

Bush also used the term “murder” to define the Enemy, as shown here: “They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11th, September 20, 2001); “A murderer is not a martyr; he is just a murderer” (Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly, November 10, 2001); and “Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction are controlled by a murderous tyrant who has already used chemical weapons to kill thousands of people” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, October 7, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Enemy: “Evil.”

Bush also defined the Enemy as “evil,” as illustrated by these examples from his speeches: “We’ve come to know truths that we will never question: Evil is real, and it must be opposed” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002); “Terror cells and outlaw regimes building weapons of mass destruction are different faces of the same evil. Our security requires that we confront both. And the United States military is capable of confronting both” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, October 7, 2002) and this:

The dictator who is assembling the world’s most dangerous weapons has already used them on whole villages – leaving thousands of his own citizens dead, blind, or disfigured. Iraqi refugees tell us how forced confessions are obtained – by torturing children while their parents are made to watch. International human rights groups have catalogued other methods used in the torture chambers of Iraq: electric shock, burning with hot irons, dripping acid on the skin, mutilation with electric drills, cutting out tongues, and rape. If this is not evil, then evil has no meaning (Address

Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Enemy: “Kill.”

Finally, Bush used the word “kill” to refer to the Enemy, as demonstrated in these examples: “The terrorists’ directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans, and make no distinctions among military and civilians, including women and children” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001) and “Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction are controlled by a murderous tyrant who has already used chemical weapons to kill thousands of people” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, October 7, 2002).

Category: Job of President

Data for this category are reported in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Five Most-Used Words By Presidents Johnson and Bush To Define the Job of President

Johnson		Bush		Z-Score
Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.	
Eisenhower (President)(General) (Mr.)	10	secure (security)	16	N/A
ask	9	protect(ion)	15	-1.21 (ask)
order(s)(ed)	8 (tie)	defense (defended)	7 (tie)	N/A
Kennedy	8 (tie)	love(d)	7 (tie)	N/A
leader(ship)	8 (tie)	strengthen (strong)	7 (tie)	N/A
help	7 (tie)	ask(ed)	5	N/A
hope(s)	7 (tie)	commander-in-chief	3	N/A
administration	6 (tie)			N/A
duty	6 (tie)			N/A
pledge(d)	6 (tie)			N/A
peace	6 (tie)			N/A
responsibility (responsibilities)	6 (tie)			N/A
TOTAL	87	TOTAL	60	2.90**

** sig. at $p < .01$

Note: Test is the difference between two binomial proportions.

Summary. Based upon the test of binomial proportions employed to examine the two presidents' five most-used terms, the results indicate that Johnson was much more likely than Bush to use terms to define the Job of President. The two presidents shared only one top key word in this category – “ask.” This small verb was coded because it emerged as important and because it seems to highlight the fact that while presidents do have certain powers, in the end their main power is the one to persuade (Neustadt 1986).

Johnson had three sets of ties in number of words used. Each tie was treated as one set for the purposes of tallying up the five words used most. Johnson referred the most to “Eisenhower,” a former president, calling him “President Eisenhower,” “General Eisenhower” and “Mr. Eisenhower” 10 times in his 16 speeches. He then turned to such

words as “ask,” used nine times; followed by a three-way tie of eight uses of “orders,” and its variants “orders” and “ordered,” “Kennedy” (meaning President Kennedy, whom he succeeded when Kennedy was assassinated) and “leader” and its variation “leadership”; a second tie in seven uses of “help” and “hope,” including its variant “hopes”; a third tie in six uses of “administration,” “duty,” “pledge” and its variant “pledged,” “peace,” and finally “responsibility” and its variant “responsibilities”.

In contrast, Bush had only one tie, and therefore his category features six fewer words than Johnson. The five words Bush used most to define the Job of President were “secure,” and its variant, “security,” 16 times; “protect,” and its variation “protection,” used 15 times; a three-way tie between “defense,” and its variant “defended,” “love” and its variation “loved” and “strengthen” and its variant “strong,” used seven times; a two-way tie between “ask” and its variant “asked,” as well as “strengthen,” and its variant “strong,” each used five times; and “commander-in-chief,” used three times.

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:
“*President Eisenhower.*” Johnson defined the Job of President by referring to “President Eisenhower” as follows:

But today finds us where President Eisenhower found himself 10 years ago. The position he took with Viet-Nam then in a letter that he sent to the then President is one that I could take in complete honesty today, and that is that we stand ready to help the Vietnamese preserve their independence and retain their freedom and keep from being enveloped by communism (Remarks to the Legislative Conference of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, March 24, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:
“*Ask.*” Johnson also defined the Job of President by the word “ask,” as shown here:

I do not ask complete approval of every phase and every action of your Government. I do ask for the support of our basic course. What is that?

That is resistance to aggression. That is moderation in the use of power. That is a constant search for peace (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“*Order.*” Johnson employed the word “order” in defining the Job of President, as shown here:

As President and Commander in Chief, it is my duty to the American people to report that renewed hostile actions against United States ships on the high seas in the Gulf of Tonkin have today required me to order the military forces of the United States to take action in reply (Radio and Television Report to the American People Following Renewed Aggression in the Gulf of Tonkin, August 4, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“*Kennedy.*” Johnson also referred to President “Kennedy” in defining the Job of President, as illustrated here: “I am going to try to see that the peace that President John Kennedy fought so valiantly to preserve is kept” (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“*Leader.*” Johnson referred to the term “leader” in defining the Job of President:

I intend as your leader and as your President to work to strengthen the United Nations, because I think they have prevented a number of wars already, and I think they can help us on the road to peace in the days ahead (Remarks in Memorial Hall, Akron University, October 21, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“*Help.*” Johnson used the term “help” to define the Job of President: “I am here today to say I need your help; I cannot bear this burden alone. I need the help of all Americans, and all America” (Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, November 27, 1963).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“*Hope.*” Johnson used the word “hope” to define the Job of President:

Every night before I turn out the lights to sleep I ask myself this question: Have I done everything that I can do to unite this country? Have I done everything I can to help unite the world, to try to bring peace and hope to all the peoples of the world? Have I done enough? (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“*Administration.*” Johnson also employed the term “administration” to refer to the Job of President, as is illustrated in this example: “And in the Gulf of Tonkin, the Johnson administration acted, and will continue to act to halt Communist aggression” (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“*Duty.*” Johnson used the term “duty” to describe the Job of President, as in this example: “I know that duty, as other Presidents have known it before me. I know that the responsibility for exercising that duty is the President’s, and it is his alone, and he is alone a great deal of the time” (Remarks at Lindbergh Field, October 28, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“*Pledge.*” Another term Johnson used to describe the Job of President is “pledge,” as demonstrated here:

In Asia, communism wears a more aggressive face. We see that in Viet-Nam. Why are we there? We are there, first, because a friendly nation has asked us for help against the Communist aggression. Ten years ago our President pledged our help. Three Presidents have supported that pledge. We will not break it now (Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“Peace.” Johnson also used the term “peace” to define the Job of President, as in the following:

But I am humble, I am humble in the belief that on the issue of war, when you take your boy down to the depot to say goodbye, maybe never to see him again, on the issue of war and peace I share the view of the Presidents of both parties who have preceded me, and I share the view of what I think is the overwhelming majority of Americans today (Remarks at Lindbergh Field, October 28, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of President:

“Responsibility.” Finally, Johnson used the term “responsibility” to define the Job of President, as in this example:

It is a solemn responsibility to have to order even limited military action by forces whose overall strength is as vast and as awesome as those of the United States of America, but it is my considered conviction, shared throughout your Government, that firmness in the right is indispensable today for peace; that firmness will always be measured (Radio and Television Report to the American People Following Renewed Aggression in the Gulf of Tonkin, August 4, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Job of President:

“Secure.” The Bush list of terms used to define the Job of President begins with “secure,” as illustrated in this example: “Whatever action is required, whenever action is necessary, I will defend the freedom and security of the American people” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Job of President:

“Protect.” The next most-used term Bush used to define the Job of President was “protect,” as shown here: “The next priority of my budget is to do everything possible to protect our citizens and strengthen our Nation against the ongoing threat of another

attack” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Job of President:
“*Defend.*” Next, Bush used the term “defend” to define the Job of President: “Whatever action is required, whenever action is necessary, I will defend the freedom and security of the American people” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Job of President:
“*Love.*” Bush also used the term “love” to define Job of the President: “They love America just as much as I do” (Remarks at the Islamic Center of Washington, September 17, 2001).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Job of President:
“*Strengthen.*” He also used a variation of the term “strengthen” to define the Job of President: “What’s on my mind is to make sure this country is strong and safe” (Remarks to the National Governors Association Conference, February 24, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Job of President:
“*Ask.*” Bush’s next-most-used term to define the Job of President is “ask,” as shown here: “I have asked Congress to authorize the use of America’s military, if it proves necessary, to enforce U.N. Security Council demands” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, October 7, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define the Job of President:
“*Commander-in-Chief.*” Finally, Bush used the term “commander-in-chief” to define the Job of President: “The United States of America has the sovereign authority to use force

in assuring its own national security. That duty falls to me, as Commander-in-Chief, by the oath I have sworn, by the oath I will keep” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, March 17, 2003).

*Category: Victims*⁴¹

Table 4.6 reports the data for this category.

Table 4.6. Five Most-Used Words By Presidents Johnson And Bush to Define Victims

Johnson		Bush		
Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.	Z-Score
South-Viet-Nam (south)	27	people	33	N/A
independence (independent)	19	Iraqi	24	N/A
Asia(n)(ns)	15	innocent	18	N/A
free(dom)	10	Afghan(s)(istan)(istan’s)	11	N/A
nation(s)	9 (tie)	free(d)(dom)	10	N/A
Viet-nam(ese)	9 (tie)			N/A
TOTAL	89	TOTAL	96	0

Summary. There was no significant difference between the two presidents’ use of words in the category of Victims, but they did share use of the word “freedom.” Johnson most used the words “South-Viet-Nam” or referred to the “south” when referring to Viet-Nam 27 times in 29 speeches; “independence” and its variant “independent,” used 19 times; “Asia,” and its variations “Asian” and “Asians,” used 15 times; “free,” and its variation “freedom,” used 10 times; and a two-way tie between “nation,” and its variant “nations,” and “Viet-Nam,” and its variant “Vietnamese,” each used nine times.

In contrast, Bush defined Victims using the five most-used words: “people,” used 33 times; “Iraqi,” used 24 times; “innocent,” used 18 times; “Afghan,” and its variations

⁴¹ For Bush, the Victims morphed from the 9/11 casualties to the people who suffered under the Taliban in Afghanistan to the people who had suffered under Saddam Hussein’s Iraq.

“Afghans,” “Afghanistan” and “Afghanistan’s; and “free,” and its variations “freed” and “freedom,” used 10 times. Bush had no ties in this category. He did go into greater detail than Johnson in this category.

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define Victims: “South Viet-Nam.” When it came to defining Victims, Johnson used the term “South Viet-Nam” the most, as demonstrated here:

I think it is well to remember that there are a hundred other little nations sitting here this moment watching what happens and what the outcome is in South Viet-Nam and if South Viet-Nam can be gobbled up, the same thing may happen to them (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define Victims: “*Independence.*” Johnson’s next-most-used term to define Victims was “independence,” as illustrated here: “We will not permit the independent nations of the East to be swallowed up by Communist conquest” (Remarks in Memorial Hall, Akron University, October 21, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define Victims: “Asia.” Johnson’s third-most-used term to define Victims is “Asia,” as shown in this example:

There are those who ask why this responsibility should be ours. The answer, I think, is simple. There is no one else who can do the job. Our power alone in the final test can stand between expanding communism and independent Asian nations. Thus when India was attacked it looked to us for help and we gave it immediately. We believe that Asia should be directed by Asians, but that means that each Asian people must have the right to find its own way, not that one group or one nation should overrun all the others (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define Victims: “Free.”

Johnson also defined Victims as “free,” as shown here:

There are some that say we ought to go south and get out and come home, but we don’t like to break our treaties and we don’t like to walk off and leave people who are searching for freedom, and suffering to obtain it, and walk out on them (Remarks in Oklahoma at the Dedication of the Eufala Dam, September 25, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define Victims: “Nation.”

Johnson defined Victims as being a “nation,” as in “The first reality is that North Viet-Nam has attacked the independent nation of South Viet-Nam. Its object is total conquest” (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define Victims: “Viet-

Nam.” Finally, Johnson defined Victims as “Viet-Nam,” as in this example:

Time and time and time again, men, women, and children – Americans and Vietnamese alike – were bombed in their villages and their homes while our forces made no reply (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define Victims: “People.”

Bush chose first to define Victims as “people,” as in this example:

The United States has no quarrel with the Iraqi people; they’ve suffered too long in silent captivity. Liberty for the Iraqi people is a great moral cause, and a great strategic goal. The people of Iraq deserve it; the security of all nations requires it (Address to the United Nations General Assembly, September 12, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define Victims: “Innocent.”

Bush also defined Victims as “innocent,” as in this example: “But those who celebrate the murder of innocent men, women, and children have no religion, have no conscience,

and have no mercy” (Address to the Nation From Atlanta on Homeland Security, November 8, 2001).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define Victims: “Afghan.”

Bush defined Victims as “Afghan,” as shown in this example: “Afghanistan’s people have been brutalized” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define Victims: “Free.”

Finally, Bush defined Victims as “free,” as shown here:

The first to benefit from a free Iraq would be the Iraqi people, themselves. Today they live in scarcity and fear, under a dictator who has brought them nothing but war, and misery, and torture. Their lives and their freedom matter little to Saddam Hussein – but Iraqi lives and freedom matter greatly to us (Remarks to the American Enterprise Institute Annual Dinner, February 26, 2003).

*Category: War*⁴²

Data for this category are reported in Table 4.7.

⁴² For Bush, the War evolved from an attack on the United States in 9/11, to an attack on the free world as a whole, as he explained on September 12, 2001, in Remarks to the National Security Team: “This enemy attacked not just our people but all freedom-loving people everywhere in the world.”

Table 4.7. Five Most-Used Words By Presidents Johnson And Bush to Define War

Johnson		Bush		
Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.	Z-Score
peace(ful)(fully)	82	security (secure)(securing)	67	.97 (peace)
Viet-Nam(Viet-Nam) (Viet-Nam's)	38	free(dom)(doms)(dom's)(r)	57	N/A
world('s)	34	terror(ism)(ist)(ists) (bioterrorism)	53	N/A
free(dom)(dom's) (ly) ^a	27	peace(ful)(fully)(-loving)	52	-.3.00** (free)
fight(ing)(fought)	22	just(ice)	42	N/A
TOTAL	203		271	-2.62**

** Sig. at p<.01

Note: Test is the difference between two binomial proportions.

Summary. Based upon the test of binomial proportions employed to examine the two presidents' five most-used terms, the results indicate that Bush was much more likely than Johnson to use terms in total to define War and to use the shared term "free" and its variants. The two presidents also shared the top key-word concepts of "peace" and "freedom" in this category, and both used many words to define War. Both defined War in terms of peace, with Johnson doing this much more so.

Johnson used the following words most in his 19 pre-escalation speeches to define War: "peace," and its variations "peaceful" and "peacefully," used 82 times; "Viet-Nam," and its variations "Viet-Nam" and "Viet-Nam's," used 38 times; "world, and its variation "world's," used 34 times; "free," and its variations "freedom," "freedom's" and "freely," used 27 times; and "fight," and its variations, "fighting" and "fought," used 22 times.

In defining War, Bush chose to focus the most on the words "secure," and its variants "secure" and "securing," used 67 times; "free," and its variants "freedom," "freedoms" and "freer," used 57 times; "terror," and its variants, "terrorism," "terrorist,"

“terrorists” and “bioterrorism,” used 53 times; “peace,” and its variants, “peaceful,” “peacefully” and “peace-loving,” used 52 times; and “just,” and its variant, “justice,” used 42 times.

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define War: “Peace.”

When it came to defining the War, Johnson’s most-used term was “peace,” as in this example from his speeches: “Our goal is peace in southeast Asia. That will come only when aggressors leave their neighbors in peace” (Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 4, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define War: “Viet-Nam.”

The next-most-used term by Johnson to define War was “Viet-Nam,” as illustrated here:

Every day some one jumps up and shouts and says, ‘Tell us what is happening in Viet-Nam and why are we in Viet-Nam, and how did you get us into Viet-Nam?’ Well, I didn’t get you into Viet-Nam. You have been in Viet-Nam 10 years. President Eisenhower wrote President Diem a letter in 1954 when the French pulled out of Viet-Nam, and said, ‘We want to help you to help your people keep from going Communist, and we will furnish you advice, we will furnish you assistance, and we will furnish you equipment, if you will furnish the men, and if you want to fight for your freedom we will try to help you’ (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define War: “World.”

Johnson also defined the War in the context of the “world,” as shown in this example:

“We fight because we must fight if we are to live in a world where every country can shape its own destiny. And only in such a world will our own freedom be finally secure” (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define War: “Free.”

Additionally, Johnson used the term “free” to define the need for War, as Johnson illustrates in this line from one of his speeches:

So let no one doubt that we are in this battle as long as South Viet-Nam wants our support and needs our assistance to protect its freedom. I have already ordered measures to step up the fighting capacity of the South Vietnamese forces, to help improve the welfare and the morale of their civilian population, to keep our forces at whatever level continued independence and freedom require (Remarks on Foreign Affairs at the Associated Press Luncheon, April 20, 1964).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Johnson to Define War: “Fight.”

Finally, Johnson defined War in terms of the word “fight,” as illustrated here: “We fight because we must fight if we are to live in a world where every country can shape its own destiny” (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define War: “Security.” Bush

chose to define War by first emphasizing “security,” as in this example:

Saddam Hussein’s refusal to comply with the demands of the civilized world is a threat to peace, and it’s a threat to stability. It’s a threat to the security of our country. It’s a threat to the security of peace leaving – peace-loving people everywhere (Remarks to the National Governors Association Conference, February 24, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define War: “Free.” Next,

Bush used “free” to define War, as shown here: “History has called America and our allies to action, and it is both our responsibility and our privilege to fight freedom’s fight” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define War: “Terror.” Bush

also used the word “terror” to define War, as illustrated here:

Today, the gravest danger in the war on terror, the gravest danger facing America and the world, is outlaw regimes that seek and possess nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. These regimes could use such weapons for blackmail, terror, and mass murder (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define War: "Peace." Like

Johnson, Bush defined the War in terms of "peace," as in this example:

Last fall the international community spoke, with united voice. It said: this is your last chance, Mr. Saddam Hussein, to do what you said you would do, which is, in the name of peace, disarm; destroy your weapons of mass destruction (Remarks at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention, February 10, 2003).

Example of Key Word in Context Used by Bush to Define War: "Just." Finally,

Bush defined the War in terms of "just," as in this example:

America will take the side of brave men and women who advocate these values around the world, including the Islamic world, because we have a greater objective than eliminating threats and containing resentment. We seek a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002).

Category: Job of Citizens

Data for this category are reported in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8. Five Most-Used Words By Presidents Johnson⁴³
And Bush to Define the Job of Citizens**

Johnson		Bush		
Word	Freq.	Word	Freq.	Z-Score
alert	2 (tie)	good(s)(goodness)	6 (tie)	-1.09 (alert)
counsel	2 (tie)	serve(service)	6 (tie)	N/A
heart	2 (tie)	alert(ing)	5	N/A
look back	2 (tie)	patient (patience)	4 (tie)	N/A
thank	2 (tie)	responsibility (responsibilities)	4 (tie)	N/A
unite	2 (tie)			N/A
TOTAL	12		28	-2.36**

**sig. at p<.01

Note: Test is the difference between two binomial proportions.

Summary. Based upon the test of binomial proportions employed to examine the two presidents’ five most-used terms, the results indicate that Bush was much more likely than Johnson to use terms in total to define the Job of Citizens. Johnson used six terms twice:⁴⁴ “alert,” “counsel,” “heart,” “look back,” “thank” and “unite.” In contrast, Bush defined the Job of Citizens as “good” and its variations “goods” and “goodness” in a tie for six uses with “serve” and its variation “service”; “alert” and its variant “alerting,” used five times; and “patient” and its variant “patience,” tied for four mentions with “responsibility” and its variation “responsibilities.”

⁴³ In order to allow Bush five most-used key words, it is necessary to give Johnson six most-used key words in this category because all Johnson’s words are tied in being used twice, and it would simply be a random choice and unrepresentative of the results to eliminate one of the terms, or the last term.

⁴⁴ Job of Citizens is a category that did not work particularly well for Johnson. In effect, every descriptor categorized under this heading is listed for him because there were so many single uses of words that qualified them as a tie. In addition, the other words used more than once were only used twice, which led to a tie among them as well. Thus it appears that Johnson used many more words most often to talk about the Job of Citizens, when if each tie is counted as one, as is done here, there are five terms used most by each president. Nevertheless, the variety of words used by Johnson, even if used only a few times, is revealing.

Johnson used the fewest words in all categories to define the Job of Citizens (12, compared to Bush's 28). And this was the category that Bush used the fewest definitional words (28), although he was the inspiration for the category.

The two presidents shared the use of the word "alert" in their top key words, a word which connotes an element of fear and perhaps a false sense of security. After all, what really can Americans do about Communism in Asia or potential terrorists at home?

Examples of Key Words in Context Used by Johnson to Define the Job of Citizens:

"Alert," "Counsel," "Hand," "Heart," "Help" "Look Back," "Thank," "Unite."

Showing how Johnson defined the Job of Citizens requires grouping some words as they appeared infrequently in sometimes just one or two quotes. Johnson used the term "alert," as in "We must be alert to shifting realities, to emerging opportunities, and always alert to any fresh dangers" (Remarks on Foreign Affairs at the Associated Press Luncheon, April 20, 1964); "counsel," as in the following:

I am prepared to submit to the Congress very shortly recommendations. Before I do that, however, I want to review with you some of my thoughts and get your judgment and your counsel and, I trust, your cooperation (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

He used "hand," "heart" and "help," as in the following:

And I want to ask you in advance, because I may just have some kind of illusion and some kind of dream about what is going to happen in November, I want to ask you in advance to give me your hand and give me your help, and give me your counsel and give me your heart, and give me your prayers, because the 37th President of this country is going to need them more than the 36th (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964).

He also uses "look back," as in the following:

So let's look back and see what our grandpa and our grandma and those that came here in '49 and those who came and started to establish a government in '76, let's look back and see how far they have come from their covered wagons to our Air Force One, our 707's, to our supersonic planes that are now on the drawing boards, that will go over 2,000 miles an hour (Remarks at Lindbergh Field, October 28, 1964).

He uses "thank," as in this example:

And on this Thanksgiving eve, as we gather together to ask the Lord's blessing, and give Him our thanks, let us unite in those familiar and cherished words: America, America, God shed His grace on thee, And crown thy good, With brotherhood, From sea to shining sea (Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, November 27, 1963).

And he uses "unite," as in this example:

Sunday night I talked about the problems of the world on television. More than 63 million Americans listened to that discussion. The great majority of them are, I think, united behind the responsible foreign policies of this country that have kept peace for us (Remarks in Memorial Hall, Akron University, October 21, 1964).

Examples of Key Words in Context Used by Bush to Define the Job of Citizens:

"Good," "Serve," "Alert," "Patient," "Responsibility." Bush's use of words to define the Job of Citizens was quite different. He used "good" the most, as in "Those of us in leadership position (sic) must understand that there are a lot of Americans who are asking what they can do to help. I like to put it in as plain terms as I can: If you want to fight evil, do some good" (Remarks to United States Mayors and County Officials, January 24, 2002); "serve," as in "And I call on all Americans to serve by bettering our communities and, thereby, defy and defeat the terrorists" (Address to the Nation From Atlanta on Homeland Security, November 8, 2001); "alert," as in "And as government works to better secure our homeland, America will continue to depend on the eyes and ears of alert citizens" (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002); and "patient," as in this example:

But in order to make sure that our homeland is secure for a long time, we as a nation must be patient enough and resolved enough to hunt down the killers and the terrorists wherever they try to hide and bring them to justice. And that's exactly what this country is going to do. I say 'patient enough' because sometimes there is a certain sense of anxiety that creeps into the national dialog. Some folks are trying to rush the scorecard, I guess, is a way to put it (Remarks to United States Mayors and County Officials, January 24, 2002).

He also uses "responsibility," as in "After September the 11th, our Government assumed new responsibilities to strengthen security at home and track down our enemies abroad. And the American people are accepting new responsibilities, as well" (Address to the Nation From Atlanta on Homeland Security, "November 8, 2001).

Conclusion

The research questions for this work focused on (1) how the two presidents used rhetoric to try to talk us into war, (2) how their addresses were similar and different in terms of the words and emphases they used, and (3) how they framed their causal stories in terms of who (or what) was to blame for the circumstances or events precipitating the war/conflict.

Regarding this secular portion of this project (the portion not involving inherently religious language), the expectation was that Johnson would use less antithetical language than Bush to define the need for war escalation/war initiation. Antithetical language was defined as language that is highly charged and provides highly contrasting descriptions of the qualities of the United States (America), its coalition, its enemy, the war, the plight of victims and job of citizens.

This expectation was both confirmed and disconfirmed. As to the confirmation, Johnson did indeed use less strident antithetical language than Bush, although both used

antithetical language.⁴⁵ In the category America, for instance, both presidents' key words defined America as exceptional,⁴⁶ and the key words in context made this even more apparent. But even on its face Johnson's definition of America's strength and power was not quite as strong as Bush's definition of America's "greatness." Consider one of Johnson's quotes on America's "strength," for instance: "We have more strength than any other nation, more strength than all nations put together, and we are going to keep it" (Remarks in Memorial Hall, Akron University, October 21, 1964). And even when Johnson defined America as powerful, he countered it with responsibility: "We are the most powerful of all nations – we must strive also to be the most responsible of nations" (Remarks Upon Signing Joint Resolution on the Maintenance of Peace and Security in Southeast Asia, August 10, 1964).

Compare this with Bush's definition of why America was targeted for attack: "We're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world" (Address to the Nation on Terrorist Attacks, September 11, 2001). And, he says, "the liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world; it is God's gift to humanity"⁴⁷ (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003).

The antithetical language was most apparent in how these presidents differed in their definitions of the Enemy. Not only is "terrorist" Bush's most-used word of all (used 317 times), but the word itself embodies the concept of extreme fear. Along with

⁴⁵ This is not to say that there were not many more dissimilarities and similarities in these presidents' definitional word choices. However, for the purposes of manageability, this project only discusses the top key words used by each president, up to as many as five, or more if there were ties.

⁴⁶ This becomes even more apparent when one examines the extensive panoply of words employed by both presidents to define America.

⁴⁷ While it would seem any quote that mentions inherently religious terms should belong in the secular findings, this quote is included here because it is a prime example of the exceptionalist terms that Bush used to define America and so was included here.

terrorist, Bush defined the Enemy using the terms “threat,” “murderers,” “evildoers” and “killers.”

Johnson’s words describing the Enemy were much less emotional and more benign. Johnson’s language was somewhat dated, at times even harking back to the terminology of a gentlemanly duel, as when he defined the Enemy as “aggressors” and “adversaries,” which are not highly emotionally charged words. Even Johnson’s “attacked” is a step down from Bush’s use of “murder.”

When it comes to defining War, Bush’s key terms were again more antithetical than Johnson’s. “Terrorism” and “bioterrorism,” as well as “security” and “justice,” figure strongly in Bush’s definitions of the need for War, while Johnson employs more traditional definitions such as “freedom,” “fight,” the location of the fight (“Viet-nam”), “peace” and the support of the “world.” Thus, even in Johnson’s seminal speech on why America was in Vietnam, he sounded toned down compared to Bush: “We fight because we must fight if we are to live in a world where every country can shape its own destiny” (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965). In contrast, we have Bush saying to Congress:

Today, the gravest danger in the war on terror, the gravest danger facing America and the world, is outlaw regimes that seek and possess nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. These regimes could use such weapons for blackmail, terror, and mass murder (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003).

As to the disconfirming data, it was surprising that there were as many similarities as there were, given the time differences between the two presidents, their differences in party affiliation, their backgrounds and their different wars. Yet there appear to be certain standard concepts presidents feel compelled to use, particularly patriotic language and

language pertaining to basic, American democratic foundational values, such as “freedom.” Coe (2007), who has studied 12 modern presidents, notes that presidents consistently, and without exception, talk about freedom and liberty in three ways, although there is variation by political context and party. Coe says presidents have “described America as the nation uniquely positioned – even destined – to lead the ‘cause of freedom’ ... Presidents have then used freedom as a primary criterion for determining who should be treated as a friend and who as a foe ... Finally, presidents have relied on freedom as a rationale for the implementation of their political policies. Wars have often been justified based on freedom ... The consistency of presidents’ messages over the past eight decades is striking, if not altogether surprising.”

In defining America, Johnson and Bush emphasized “freedom” in their five most-used terms. They also repeatedly referred to the United States as a “nation.” The latter may seem purely definitional, but to understand its significance and why it arose out of grounded research, one has to counterpose that definition with these presidents’ descriptions of the Enemy, defined variously as a camp, a state, a regime, and other similar terms. The American Psychological Association’s *WordNet* defines a “nation” as “a large body of people, associated with a particular territory, that is sufficiently conscious of its unity to seek or to possess a government peculiarly its own.” Words such as “camp,” “state” and “regime” do not connote that same level of political organization, civilization, values or indeed respect that are due a “nation.” Thus, to define America as a “nation,” while defining the Enemy’s country as a “camp,” a “state” or a “regime” is to de-civilize the Enemy and perhaps make it morally easier to wage war against it.

Both presidents also included the concepts “world” and “ally” to define what they considered to be their Coalition. Certainly to say the world supports you in your cause is to validate your cause. And to define the Coalition as an “ally” connotes a level of buy-in by other countries to your cause.

In the category of Job of President, the only category in which Johnson used more inherently religious words than Bush, the only word used by both presidents in their top five key-words was “ask.” This little word is significant because it suggests that while the president has the powers of commander-in-chief, executive and statesman, his real power lies in his power to persuade, using his bully pulpit (Edwards 2003). Words are his tool to sell his policy, and so he must “ask” for support, but ask persuasively. This diminutive term embodies a key presumption behind this study, that words employed by the president are powerful and are used as key policy tools.

The concept of “freedom” again crops up in the top key words these presidents use to define the people they labeled as victims. According to both of their definitions, victims desire freedom. And indeed, freeing the victims is one of the main reasons presidents give for going to war (or escalating one). Victims must be freed from what is described as appalling violations to their freedom imposed upon them by the enemy. Freedom is not seen as a basic human right denied victims by the enemy, but a value necessary to world security and moral order. Therefore, presidents justify war by saying they and their coalition must free victims.

Freedom is also given as a defining reason for war. Freedom is a noble concept, a seemingly selfless concept and one upon which the United States was founded. Just as it seems important and right to make victims free, it is also important and right, according

to these presidents, to fight a war for the cause of freedom, a cause valued by civilized people the world over. It is difficult to question the cause of freedom. And it is difficult to define freedom. But apparently it resonates widely across populations, even though these presidents, in using it to justify war, were talking about freedom, American-style.

Paradoxically, the two presidents also defined war in terms of “peace.” The reason for war is to restore peace, and one must use violence to achieve peace, according to their definitions. A desire for peace also implies a reluctance to wage war, and thus both presidents depict the United States as a sleeping giant that is only stirred to righteous violence when aroused, but which would rather have peace than war. If a nation is seen as reluctant to go to war, it does not seem self-aggrandizing or self-interested. Therefore, its cause of war appears to be more just. The presidents shared no similar key words when it came to the Job of Citizens.

In terms of Stone’s causal story or narrative, we can boil down the argument of both presidents to the idea (more antithetically stated by Bush) that America, its coalition and the victims are good, while the enemy is bad (in Bush’s case, the epitome of evil). The enemy provokes America, the bastion of freedom and power, and the free world, by challenging basic principles and values. The enemy has oppressed the victims, and they are in desperate need of help that only America and its allies can give. The war is unwanted, but necessary, just and completely supported by the coalition of nations. America is called by history and God to lead it. Presidents, who are good and humble and righteous, need the help and support of their citizens. The job of citizens, according to Johnson, is to be alert, caring, united and supportive of the war. Bush also wants people to be alert, but he goes beyond this to call for acts of kindness, patience and

responsibility. He, too, urges complete support, but unlike Johnson, is less the supplicant in doing so. The implied job of citizens is to support, unquestioningly, their president's decision to go to war.

The upcoming Chapter 5 summarizes the key “inherently religious words” words used by each president in the main definitional categories. It begins with a brief history of each president's religious background and ends with some conclusions about their different use of inherently religious speech.

CHAPTER 5 – EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ON RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

Introduction

When it comes to references to religion, presidential rhetoric has changed substantially since President John F. Kennedy. In a 1960 speech, JFK urged voters not to consider a candidate's faith when they entered the voting booth. While President Jimmy Carter was the first president to claim to be a "born again" Christian and is responsible for reintroducing "matters of faith and belief into the arena of public discourse," President George W. Bush was the first presidential candidate to declare that Jesus was his favorite philosopher (on the eve of the 2000 Iowa precinct caucuses) (Balmer 2008, 1-2).

Since 1980, with the exception of President Bill Clinton, "candidates who have made forthright professions of evangelical faith and who have enjoyed the support of the Religious Right have occupied the Oval Office," although Clinton was able to "speak the evangelical language of sin and redemption" (Balmer 2008, 3). Balmer says there has, in effect, been a "religionization of our politics" (2008, 4).

In this section, the pre-war-escalation speeches of Johnson and the pre-war speeches of Bush are analyzed for their "inherently religious" terms. "Inherently religious" words are defined here as words that in and of themselves connote a relationship to religion. Thus, a word such as "prayer" is seen as inherently religious

because there is a direct connection to religion. Other words used in religion, however, may or may not qualify, depending on the context. “Blessing” and “faith,” for example, can have religious and non-religious meanings, so they are counted as inherently religious words only when they directly relate to religion. Thus, each word is examined in context to make sure it qualifies as an inherently religious word.

It should be noted again that Johnson and Bush differed dramatically in their religious orientation. Johnson’s religious lineage was “a mixture of various influences, from Baptist to Christadelphian, ... a marginal, non-trinitarian group with roots in nineteenth-century Britain and America” (Balmer 2008, 50). “At age 15, Johnson joined the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a Protestant group with roots in the Restorationist movement of the early nineteenth century, an attempt to restore Christianity to its primitive, first-century purity” (Balmer 2008, 50). Balmer speculates this was “a reaction on young Lyndon’s part to the fire-and-brimstone preachers he encountered in Baptist circles and in local camp meetings” and that he “gravitated instead to the more liberal and tolerant Disciples group, with their emphasis on good works” (Balmer 2008, 50). Balmer says Johnson’s “baptism was also, almost certainly, a manifestation of adolescent rebellion,” his mother being a “prim Baptist” (Balmer 2008, 50-51). Balmer concludes, “Johnson himself, however, evinced little piety, and what little he showed during his long career of public life could properly be called perfunctory, even performative” (2008, 51). What he did seem to glean from his ascent from poverty and from his parents were “the rudiments of a kind of ‘golden rule’ of Christianity,” Balmer says (2008, 52). Goodwin quotes Johnson as saying, “At the center of my mother’s philosophy was the belief that the strong must care for the weak” (1976, 55).

Bush, on the other hand, like Jimmy Carter, pledged to “cleanse the temple of the Oval Office” (after Bill Clinton) and “offered himself as a model of probity, someone who had forsaken a dissolute life of alcohol abuse in favor of the path of moral rectitude” (Balmer 2008, 143-4). He had been raised in an Episcopal household, attended a Presbyterian church, but was by all accounts a “party guy” (Balmer 2008, 144). While his 1977 marriage to Laura Welch, a graduate of Southern Methodist University, tamed him in some respects and drew him to her church, he continued to have an alcohol problem. It wasn’t until 1984, when Bush had lunch with an evangelist named Arthur Blessitt, who had been carrying a large wooden cross with him since 1969, that Bush prayed and was “born again.” However, he continued to drink. Subsequently, the family summoned noted evangelist Billy Graham, and in 1985, after a private walk with Graham, Bush says he renewed his faith, started to read the Bible regularly and began taking part in a group Community Bible Study, designed by a conservative organization. Thereafter, he vowed to give up alcohol and spoke openly about his faith and later about how God and the power of prayer had enabled him to become president. In 1999, he summoned a group of prominent pastors to his governor’s mansion to “lay hands” on him, assuring them he felt “called” to run for president. It was during a debate on December 13, 1999, that he declared that Christ was his favorite philosopher “because he changed my life” (Balmer 2008, 144-5; Mansfield 2003, 53, 56, 63-66, 67-73; Smith 2006, 367-368, 372, 373).

Given this brief background, it is no wonder that Johnson and Bush used different inherently religious language (both due to their background, the different time periods in which they were president and the nature of their wars) and used that language to different extents, as the following summary and categorical data reveal.

The Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

Summary

Johnson and Bush used inherently religious terms and biblical allusions to define the need for war, with Johnson doing so to a lesser extent than Bush. Such language allowed these presidents to tap into the manifest destiny theme that characterizes the United States as a country called by God to right wrongs and to enhance their arguments by connecting to American civil religion. The words most used in this category include the up to five most-used key terms, if there were that many, and fewer if there were not. In some cases, the full list of words used was exhausted, as indicated.

In total, Johnson used 41 key inherently religious terms in 16 pre-war-escalation speeches, compared to 176 terms by Bush in 29 pre-war speeches. Johnson and Bush used inherently religious words the most to define the Job of President (30 Johnson to 115 Bush), although Bush used more such words (but also had slightly more column inches of speech compared to Johnson) (see Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1. Total Use of Inherently Religious Words in All Categories
By Presidents Johnson and Bush**

Categories	Johnson	Bush
America	6	21
Coalition	0	10
Enemy	0	19
Job of President	30	115
Victims	1	2
War	2	9
Job of Citizens	2	0
TOTAL	41	176

As with the previous data discussed in Chapter 4, this chapter examines how the two presidents employed this rhetoric in the various categories. The results indicate Bush was much more likely than Johnson to use inherently religious terms in total to define the categories.

Category: America

Data for this category are reported in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2. Three Most-Used Inherently Religious Words
By Presidents Johnson and Bush to Define America**

Johnson		Bush		
Word†	Freq.	Word†	Freq.	Z-Score
faith	3	bless(ed)(ings)	7 (tie)	-0.95 (faith)
God	2	God('s)	7 (tie)	-1.62 (God)
blessings	1	created (creator)	2 (tie)	-1.15 (bless)
		prayer(s)	2 (tie)	N/A
		faiths	1 (tie)	N/A
		religion	1 (tie)	N/A
		worship	1 (tie)	N/A
TOTAL	6		21	-2.76**

†Full list exhausted.

**sig. at $p < .01$

Note: Test is the difference between two binomial proportions.

Summary

Based upon the test of binomial proportions employed to examine the two presidents' most-used terms, the results indicate that Bush was much more likely than Johnson to use inherently religious terms in total to define America. The three most-used inherently religious terms by Johnson to define America were "faith" (three times); "God" (twice)" and "blessings" (once). There was a two-way tie in the three most-used inherently religious terms by Bush to define America; they were "blessed" and its variations "blessed" and "blessings" and "God," and its variation "God's," each used

seven times. Next, in a two-way tie for two uses each, were “created,” and its variation “creator,” and “prayer,” and its variation “prayers,” used twice. And, in a three-way tie for one use each was “faiths,” “religion” and “worship.”

Johnson and Bush shared the use of the words (and their variations) “faith,” “God” and “blessings,” all used by Johnson. Bush went beyond those three uses to include the words (and their variations) “created,” “prayer,” “religion” and “worship.”

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words in Context Used by Johnson to Define America: “Faith,” “God,” “Blessings.” Johnson used three inherently religious words to define America: “faith,” as in “So it was in the beginning. So it shall always be, while God is willing, and we are strong enough to keep the faith” (Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 4, 1965); “God,” as in this example:

Let’s just see if we can’t find something good about America, and let’s see if we can’t take a little pride in that flag, and let’s see if we can’t have a little feeling well up in us and see if we can’t get down on our knees sometime during the night and thank God that I am an American (Remarks at Lindbergh Field, October 28, 1964).

And he used “blessings,” as in “We, with all of our power and all of our resources, and all of our blessings, are doing something to reach down and extend a helping hand to our neighbor, and to love thy neighbor as thyself” (Remarks at Lindbergh Field, October 28, 1964).

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words in Context Used by Bush to Define America: “Bless,” “God,” “Created,” “Prayer,” “Faiths,” “Religion,” “Worship.” Bush used the same inherently religious words as Johnson, as well as others, to define America. First, he used “bless,” as in “As our nation moves troops and builds alliances to make our world safer, we must also remember our calling as a blessed country is to make

this world better” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003); “God,” as in “The liberty we prize is not America’s gift to the world, it is God’s gift to humanity” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003); “created,” as in “Our deepest national conviction is that every life is precious, because every life is the gift of a Creator who intended us to live in liberty and equality. More than anything else, this separates us from the enemy we fight” (Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 11, 2002); “prayer” and “worship,” as in “We have seen it as Americans have reassessed priorities, parents spending more time with their children and many people spending more time in prayer and in houses of worship” (Address to the Nation From Atlanta on Homeland Security, November 8, 2001); and “faiths” and “religion,” as in “We respect people of all faiths and welcome the free practice of religion; our enemy wants to dictate how to think and how to worship, even to their fellow Muslims” (Address to the Nation From Atlanta on Homeland Security, November 8, 2001).

Category: Coalition

Data for this category are reported in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3. Three Most-Used Inherently Religious Words
By Presidents Johnson and Bush to Define the Coalition**

Johnson		Bush	
Word	Freq.	Word†	Freq.
NONE		Muslim(s)	5
		Islamic	2
		faith	1
		worship	1
		bless	1
TOTAL	0		10
†Full list exhausted.			

Summary

Bush was much more likely than Johnson to use terms in total to define the Coalition. Indeed, Johnson used no inherently religious words to describe his Coalition, while Bush used 10. Bush used the word “Muslim” and its variation “Muslims,” five times; “Islamic,” used twice; and had a three-way tie in the single use of “faith,” “worship” and “bless.”

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words in Context Used by Bush to Define the Coalition: “Muslim,” “Islamic,” “Faith.” Examples of Bush’s use of inherently religious words to define the Coalition as “Muslim” include:

Like the good folks standing with me, the American people were appalled and outraged at last Tuesday’s attacks. And so were Muslims all across the world. Both Americans, our Muslim friends and citizens, taxpaying citizens, and Muslims in nations were just appalled and could not believe what we saw on our TV screens (Remarks at the Islamic Center of Washington, September 17, 2001).

He also defines the Coalition as “Islamic,” as in “I also thank the Arab and Islamic countries that have condemned terrorist murder” (Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly, November 10, 2001) and in terms of “faith,” as in this example:

I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001).

Category: Enemy

Data for this category are reported in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4. Most-Used Inherently Religious Words
By Presidents Johnson and Bush to Define the Enemy**

Johnson		Bush		Z-score
Word	Freq.	Word†	Freq.	
NONE		faith	6	
		religion(s)(religious)	4	
		Allah	2	
		God('s)	2	
		blaspheme	1	
		Christians	1	
		holy	1	
		Islam	1	
		Jews	1	
TOTAL	0		19	-4.21

†Full list exhausted.

Summary

Bush was much more likely than Johnson to use inherently religious terms in total to define the Enemy. Indeed, in this category, Bush was the only one to use inherently religious words in a defining way, using 19 words to Johnson's zero. Bush used "faith," six times; "religion," and its variations "religions" and "religious," four times; "God," and its variation "God's," and "Allah," twice; and finally the following words once: "blaspheme," "Christians," "holy," "Islam" and "Jews."

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words Used in Context By Bush to Define the Enemy: “Faith,” “Religion,” “God,” “Allah,” “Blaspheme,” “Christians,” “Jews,” “Islam.” An example of Bush’s use of “faith” is “The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001). Bush used “religion” in the following example to define the Enemy: “The Government that used to hate women and not educate its children and disrupt humanitarian supplies and destroy religious symbols of other religions is now in rout” (Remarks to the United States Attorney Conference, November 29, 2001).

Bush used the terms “Allah” and “blaspheme” to define the Enemy, as in this example:

I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It’s practiced freely by many millions of Americans and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001).

Bush also referred to “Christians” and “Jews” in defining the Enemy, as in this example: “They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001). Another inherently religious word Bush used to define the Enemy is “holy,” as in this example: “The terrorists call their cause holy, yet they fund it with drug dealing” (Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly, November 10, 2001).

Bush used the word “Islam,” as follows:

I believe there is a reason that history has matched this nation with this time. America strives to be tolerant and just. We respect the faith of Islam, even as we fight those whose actions defile that faith (Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 11, 2002).

Category: Job of President

Data for this category is reported in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5. Most-Used Inherently Religious Words By Presidents Johnson and Bush to Define the Job of President

Johnson		Bush		Z-Score
Word†	Freq.	Word	Freq.	
God('s)	7	God('s)(-given)	33	-3.89** (God)
blessing(s)	3 (tie)	pray(s)(er)(ers)(ed)	41	-2.75** (bless)
pray(er)(ers)	3 (tie)	faith(ful)(s)	17	-5.40** (prayer)
prophet	3 (tie)	bless(ings)(ed)	16	N/A
Lord('s)	2 (tie)	He(His)	8	N/A
Him (His)	2 (tie)			-1.73 (Him)
Isaiah	2 (tie)			N/A
Bible (biblical)	2 (tie)			N/A
church	1 (tie)			N/A
heaven	1 (tie)			N/A
cursing	1 (tie)			N/A
spiritual	1 (tie)			N/A
tabernacle	1 (tie)			N/A
grace	1 (tie)			N/A
TOTAL	30		115	-1.90*

†Full list exhausted.

*sig. at p<.05; **sig. at p<.01

Note: Test is the difference between two binomial proportions.

Summary

Based upon the test of binomial proportions used to examine the two presidents' most-used words, the results indicate Bush was more likely than Johnson to use inherently religious terms in total to define the Job of President and especially to use the

shared words “God,” “bless” and “prayer,” and their variants. Although it did not meet the Z-score test for significance, Bush also used the term “He” and its variant more than Johnson.

Johnson used 85 fewer inherently religious words than Bush to define the Job of President. However, both presidents did use four of the same words: “God,” “bless,” “pray,” and “Him” or “He.”

Johnson used “God” and its variant “God’s” seven times; experienced a three-way tie in his use of “blessing,” and its variant “blessings,” used three times each; had a four-way tie in his use of “Lord,” and its variant “Lord’s,” “Him” and its variant “His,” “Isaiah” and “Bible” and its variant “biblical, each used twice; and finally had a six-way tie in the use of “church,” “heaven,” “cursing,” “spiritual,” “tabernacle” and “grace,” each used once.

To define the Job of President, Bush used “God” and its variants “God’s” and “God-given” 33 times; “pray” and its variants “prays,” “prayer,” “prayers” and “prayed,” used 41 times; “faith” and its variants “faithful” and “faiths,” used 17 times; “blessing” and its variants “blessings” and “blessed,” used 16 times; and “He,” and its variant “His,” used eight times. Johnson distinguished himself in this category by using more different words (14 to Bush’s five), but Bush used more words total (115 to Johnson’s 30).

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words Used by Johnson in Context to Define the Job of President: “God,” “Blessing,” “Prayer,” “Prophet,” “Lord,” “Him,” “Grace,” “Isaiah,” “Bible,” “Church,” “Heaven,” “Cursing,” “Spiritual,” “Tabernacle.” He used “God,” as in, “I asked for God’s help and for yours” (Remarks in

Oklahoma at the Dedication of the Eufala Dam, September 25, 1964); “blessing,” “heaven” and “cursing,” as in this example:

We may well be living in the time foretold many years ago when it was said: ‘I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live’ (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965).

He used “prayer,” as in

Call the roll of Americans who have shaped the world policy of the United States in your lifetime: Truman and Eisenhower and Kennedy, Acheson and John Foster Dulles, Arthur Vandenberg and Walter George, Warren Austin and Henry Cabot Lodge. These were men of every party, and I am proud to say of every section. Everyone agreed on the great shaping principles of America’s foreign policy. Together they offered the biblical prayer, ‘Peace be to this house.’ For them the house of peace was the entire world (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964).

He also used “prophet,” as in “Let me, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, “Come now, let us reason together,” let me take a moment to discuss these with you” (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964). He used “Lord,” as in this example:

But I am solemnly pledged with whatever ability the good Lord gave me, whatever energy and talents I possess, to do my dead level best to keep our world at peace – and with all that is in me I am determined to keep that vow to you (Remarks at Lindbergh Field, October 28, 1964).

And he used “Him” and “grace,” as in this example:

And on this Thanksgiving eve, as we gather together to ask the Lord’s blessing, and give Him our thanks, let us unite in those familiar and cherished words: America, America, God shed His grace on thee, And crown thy good, With brotherhood, From sea to shining sea (Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, November 27, 1963).

Johnson also used inherently religious terms to define the Job of President by employing such words as “Isaiah,” the prophet, as in “That is the course, I

think, that we should follow, the course of the prophet Isaiah, ‘Come now, let us reason together’” (Remarks in Memorial Hall, Akron University, October 21, 1964); “Bible,” as in “We must say in southeast Asia – as we did in Europe – in the words of the Bible: ‘Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further’” (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965); “church,” as in “Last Sunday, Palm Sunday, as I sat in church, I thought about all the problems that faced this world – ancient feuds and recent quarrels that have disturbed widely separated parts of the earth” (Remarks to the Legislative Conference of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, March 24, 1964). And he used “spiritual” and “tabernacle,” as in the following:

So the point I want to leave with you good people, Republicans and Democrats, and Independents, and folks who do your own thinking, the thing I want to leave with you before I go to that tabernacle in Salt Lake City and meet that wonderful man, President McKay, who has given me great spiritual strength and given great leadership, I want to leave this with you: We work for peace not as Democrats, not as Republicans, but as Americans (Remarks at Lindbergh Field, October 28, 1964).

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words Used by Bush to Define the Job of

President: “God,” “Pray,” “Faith,” “Bless,” “He.” In defining the Job of President,

Bush used the terms “God,” as in this example:

We Americans have faith in ourselves, but not in ourselves alone. We do not know – we do not claim to know all the ways of Providence, yet we can trust in them, placing our confidence in the loving God behind all of life, and all of history. May He guide us now. And may God continue to bless the United States of America (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003).

He used “pray,” as in:

I turn to them without hesitation and say, it is the greatest gift you can give anybody, is to pray on their behalf. I especially feel that because I believe in prayer. I pray. I pray for strength, I pray for guidance, I pray for

forgiveness. And I pray to offer my thanks for a kind and generous Almighty God (Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast, February 6, 2003).

He used “faith,” as in “At the same time, faith shows us the reality of good and the reality of evil” (Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast, February 7, 2002); “bless,” as in “In this time of testing for our nation, my family and I have been blessed by the prayers of countless of Americans. We have felt their sustaining power, and we’re incredibly grateful” (Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast, February 7, 2002); and “He,” as in “We’re confident, too, that history has an author who fills time and eternity with His purpose” (Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly, November 10, 2001).

Category: Victims

Data for this category are summarized in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6. Most-Used Inherently Religious Words By Presidents Johnson And President Bush to Define Victims

Johnson		Bush	
Word†	Freq.	Word†	Freq.
God	1	religion	1 (tie)
		souls	1 (tie)
TOTAL	1		2

†Full list exhausted.

Summary

Bush was more likely than Johnson to use inherently religious terms in total to define Victims. Bush used twice as many words as Johnson, although the numbers were small. The two presidents had no similarities in this category. Johnson used “God” once; Bush used “religion” once and “souls” once.

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words in Context Used by Johnson to Define Victims: “God.” Johnson’s use of “God” is demonstrated in this quote: “Our Nation was created to help strike away the chains of ignorance and misery and tyranny wherever they keep man less than God means him to be” (Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 4, 1965).

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words in Context Used by Bush to Define Victims: “Religion,” “Souls.” Bush’s use of “religion” is illustrated as follows:

Afghanistan’s people have been brutalized. Many are starving, and many have fled. Women are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001).

Bush also used the term “souls,” as in this quote: “There is a line in our time, and in every time, between the defenders of human liberty and those who seek to master the minds and souls of others” (Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 11, 2002).

Category: War

Data for this category are summarized in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7. Most-Used Inherently Religious Words By Presidents Johnson and Bush to Define War

Johnson		Bush		
Word†	Freq.	Word†	Freq.	Z-Score
Christmas Eve	1 (tie)	Christians	2 (tie)	N/A
prophet	1 (tie)	Jews	2 (tie)	N/A
		Islamic	2 (tie)	N/A
		God	1 (tie)	N/A
		jihad	1 (tie)	N/A
		religion	1 (tie)	N/A
TOTAL	2		9	-1.97**

†Full list exhausted.

**sig. at p<.05

Note: Test is the difference between two binomial proportions.

Summary

Based upon the test of binomial proportions used to examine the two presidents' most-used terms, the results indicate that Bush was more likely than Johnson to use inherently religious terms in total to define War. This category elicited two terms from Johnson, compared to six terms from Bush, with no common words. Johnson used "Christmas Eve" and "prophet" once each. Bush used "Christians," "Jews" and "Islamic" twice each; and "God," "jihad" and "religion" once each.

Example of Inherently Religious Key Words Used by Johnson to Define War:

"Christmas Eve." Johnson's use of "Christmas Eve" is illustrated in this quote: "There was the Christmas Eve bombing of the Brinks Hotel in Saigon" (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965). Johnson again uses the Old Testament term "prophet" and quotes Scripture. His use of "prophet" is shown here:

The people of the world, I think, prefer reasoned agreement to ready attack. That is why we must follow the prophet Isaiah many, many times before we send the Marines and say, 'Come now, let us reason together,' and this is our objective: the quest for peace and not the quarrels of war (Remarks to the Legislative Conference of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, March 24, 1964).

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words in Context Used by Bush to Define

War: "Christians," "Jews," "Islamic," "Jihad," "God," "Religion." Bush's use of "Christians" is shown in the following quote: "We are the target of enemies who boast they want to kill – kill all Americans, kill all Jews, and kill all Christians" (Address to the Nation From Atlanta on Homeland Security, November 8, 2001). Bush used "Jews" as follows: "The terrorists' directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans, and make no distinctions among military and civilians, including women and children" (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001). He used "Islamic" and "jihad" as follows: "This group and its leader, a person named Usama bin Laden, are linked to many other organizations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan" (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001). He used "God" as follows: "Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them" (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress of the United States in Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001). However, he then distinguished war from religion ("Our war is not against a religion," Remarks Announcing the Most Wanted Terrorists List, October 10, 2001), to which one wants to

respond, “Which is it?” Finally, he used “religion” as follows: “Our war is not against a religion” (Remarks Announcing the Most Wanted Terrorists List, October 10, 2001).

Category: Job of Citizens

Data for this category are summarized in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8. Most-Used Inherently Religious Words By Presidents Johnson And Bush to Define the Job of Citizens

Johnson		Bush	
Word†	Freq.	Word†	Freq.
God	1	NONE	
prayers	1		
TOTAL	2		0

†Full list exhausted.

Summary

In the category of Job of Citizens, Johnson used “God” and “prayers” each once; Bush used no inherently religious words in this category.

Examples of Inherently Religious Key Words in Context Used by Johnson to

Define the Job of Citizens: “God,” “Prayers.” Johnson used “God” as follows:

Let’s just see if we can’t find something good about America, and let’s see if we can’t take a little pride in that flag, and let’s see if we can’t have a little feeling well up in us and see if we can’t get down on our knees sometime during the night and thank God that I am an American (Remarks at Lindbergh Field, October 28, 1964).

He also tried to inspire faith in country and to ask for help:

Let’s just see if we can’t find something good about America, and let’s see if we can’t take a little pride in that flag, and let’s see if we can’t have a little feeling well up in us and see if we can’t get down on our knees sometime during the night and thank God that I am an American (Remarks at Lindbergh Field, October 28, 1964).

And he asked for “prayers,” as follows:

And I want to ask you in advance, because I may just have some kind of illusion and some kind of dream about what is going to happen in November, I want to ask you in advance to give me your hand and give me your help, and give me your counsel and give me your heart, and give me your prayers, because the 37th President of this country is going to need them more than the 36th (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964).

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on how Presidents Johnson and Bush used inherently religious language to define the various categories that led them to escalate and launch their respective wars. The expectation was that Johnson would use less inherently religious language than Bush. One reason for this expectation was that Johnson's background involved a brush with civil religion that instilled in him some basic human values, which could be traced to Christian roots, but which were not necessarily framed that way, while Bush claimed to have had a distinctly religious experience that he drew upon to build his base of political supporters. In addition, Bush's language was striking in its religious references to this researcher and to prominent others, including the media, even before this analysis was begun. It could be expected that Bush's fundamentalist, neo-conservative background would prompt him to make more frequent use of religious language than Johnson and to see war as a messianic mission, rather than as a secular policy choice based upon shared human values.

Johnson used about four times fewer inherently religious words than Bush. However, the presidents shared many key words, which is not that surprising considering that the generic language of Western religions relies upon a handful of common words. For instance, in defining America, both presidents used the words "faith," "God" and

“bless,” which actually exhausted Johnson’s dictionary of terms for that category. These words are part of the common lexicon of Western religions. Bush went beyond these generic terms by talking about, for instance, being “created,” “prayers” and “worship,” reflecting a deeper and more personal relationship with religion. But, it must be noted, he also was dealing with an enemy that was religiously motivated.

In defining the Coalition, Johnson used no inherently religious words. But Bush made a point to address the religion that provided the context for the first version of the enemy in his war – the Islamic Taliban. Thus, he used terms not usually employed by presidents in defining their allies or their enemies, such as “Muslim” and “Islamic,” plus some of the more standard religious terms.

Johnson again used no inherently religious terms to define the Enemy, which was largely defined as Communist by him (even though Communism is a-religious). Bush broadened his religious references from “Islam” and “Allah” to include “Jews” and “Christians,” as he made the case that the Enemy was also out to attack Jews and Christians. Bush also used terms not typically employed by presidents, but used by priests, such as “blaspheme,” an Old Testament word not much in use these days, and “holy.”

Surprisingly, in the category of Job of President, Johnson used more inherently religious terms than did Bush, although Bush used the key words he chose words more often. Johnson surprised again by using some words that were either Old Testament terms or not much in use by presidents, such as “prophet,” “Lord,” “Isaiah” (referring to the biblical prophet), “Bible,” “heaven,” “cursing,” “tabernacle” and “grace.” Indeed, Johnson spoke of visiting the head of the Mormon Church. Bush used fairly standard

religious terms, although not a lot of presidents would refer to God in such as personal way as to call God “He” or “His.” Bush’s use of “God” also included “God-given,” which is a reference to the American theme of Manifest Destiny and perhaps reflective of Bush’s proclaimed evangelical beliefs.

In defining Victims, Johnson only used the word “God” once, while Bush included a word usually reserved more for priests than presidents – “souls.” “Souls” is a word often associated with salvation, a concept presidents typically do not emphasize.

In defining War, Johnson’s terms were skewed by his Christmas Eve address, and therefore his reference to that religious (albeit generic) event. But again, he used an Old Testament word not usually employed by presidents – “prophet.” In this category, Bush brought in a new concept for Americans – “jihad” – an Islamic term for holy war. This was also a category in which Bush brought in other faiths by his reference to “Christians,” “Jews” and “Islamic.” Bush used far more terms than Johnson in this category.

Finally, in defining the Job of Citizens, Bush surprisingly used no inherently religious terms, while Johnson used fairly standard ones such as “God” and “prayers.”

The causal narrative here for Johnson seems to have been less about the Vietnam War having a religious side and more about Johnson wrestling with his own role as a president involved in a war that he did not wholly support. Moreover, he was thrust into the role of presidency and appeared to be struggling to define it for himself. For Bush, the causal narrative was from the beginning religious. The 9/11 terrorists were Islamic, and they were fighting a jihad against the United States and Western culture. The War was very much a war not just for ideals, such as freedom, but also a struggle to preserve the

integrity of Israel in the Middle East. This was especially evident as Bush broadened the Enemy to become Iran, Iraq and North Korea (Bush's "axis of evil"), and then, finally, Saddam Hussein and Iraq. Given U.S. support for Israel, setting up this supposed threat to Israel added a religious reason for the war that was consistent with American foreign policy, and so made it more difficult to criticize.

It appears that when American presidents sprinkle their definitional reasons for war with religious language they can generate more support – if they do not go too far, meaning if they stick with basic, Western, civil religious concepts. They can tap into Manifest Destiny themes taught to Americans that their country is one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. However, as mentioned, this is not easily exportable. Bush used the Manifest Destiny theme much more than Johnson, whose war did not necessarily contain a distinct religious element (even though Communist theory is based upon a negation of God)⁴⁸ and who had a much less profound religious experience than Bush.

Chapter 6 presents a summary and discussion of the highlights of the data in Chapter 4 (the secular findings) and Chapter 5 (the inherently religious findings). The latter discussion includes a more detailed discussion of the use of Manifest Destiny by the two presidents. Chapter 6 also discusses how this project advances the literature, examines some limitations of this study and suggests numerous areas for further research, particularly in the area of problem definition by probability statement, in which predictions of the future are made.

⁴⁸ Aiello (2005) says, "American claims that Communist philosophy was fundamentally atheistic had obvious merit. Communist thinkers from Marx to Lenin to Trotsky to Stalin advocated an abandonment of a religion they felt to be superstitious and unproductive. Thus mid-century Americans referred to 'godless communism.'"

CHAPTER SIX – SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a brief summary of highlights of the findings from Chapters 4 (findings on secular language) and 5 (findings on religious language), discusses how they can be interpreted in terms of Stone's (1989) concept of the causal story and explores the meaning of these findings for citizens and for public policy analysis. This chapter then discusses what the findings add to the literature on problem definition, presidential studies and political communication. It then proceeds to outline the limitations of this study. Finally, this chapter suggests numerous areas for further research, including the fertile area of problem definition by probability statement.

Discussion of Empirical Findings on Secular Language From Chapter 4

With respect to the number of speeches each president gave pre-escalation of war or pre-war, Johnson had 83 fewer inches of speech copy than Bush (1,084 total inches versus 1,167 total inches, respectively) in 16 speeches (versus 29 for Bush). Yet despite this relatively small difference in inches of speech, Johnson used almost half as many key terms as Bush, far fewer than one might have expected. This could point to a variety of interpretations, among them these four: (1) Bush had a more focused message, while Johnson's was more abstract (2) Bush had more of a commitment to his war, given that he started it (unlike Johnson, who inherited his war and found it conflicted with his desired domestic focus), (3) Johnson might have used more key words if he had given

more major speeches on Vietnam,⁴⁹ and (4) Johnson was more difficult to code than Bush because he spoke more indirectly and philosophically about his war (and the flipside of war – peace), unlike Bush, who spoke quite directly.

The two presidents shared a number of most-used key words in various categories, as has been pointed out. These key words emerged from among scores of definitional words coded for each president.⁵⁰ The following are some highlights of the findings in notable categories:

Regarding their definition of America, while both presidents shared a sense of the supposed singularity of United States, Bush's language seemed more confident than Johnson's, even to the point that Bush seemed arrogant. Surely a prime example of this is Bush's statement, "The liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world, it is God's gift to humanity" (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003). It is difficult to imagine peoples of other countries not taking offense at such a claim. Johnson, meanwhile, seemed more willing to balance statements about U.S. "singularity" with humility, as in this example: "We are the most powerful of all nations – we must strive also to be the most responsible of nations" (Remarks Upon Signing Joint Resolution on the Maintenance of Peace and Security in Southeast Asia, August 10, 1964).

⁴⁹ As Hinckley (1990) points out, Johnson gave only one foreign policy speech on Vietnam from 1965 through 1967 that fit her criteria for a major speech. Further, Hinckley says "Johnson is so busy responding to crises in the two years that he *does* [italics mine] make speeches that he takes no time to address the nation on all the legislation he is moving through Congress" (21-2).

⁵⁰ To narrow the focus of this study, it was necessary to hone in on the up to five most-used key words used by each president to define America, the Coalition, the Enemy, the Job of President, the Victims, the War and the Job of Citizens, categories which arose out of grounded research. I say "up to five" because in some of the categories that produced fewer key words in general the presidents did not have as many as five top key words.

When it came to defining America, Johnson's use of "world" also stood out when used in the context of "world order." It would be interesting to explore what Johnson meant by "world order" (perhaps holding back the forces of Communism?), but obviously the Vietnam War represented to him a way to preserve it.

Also notable for Bush in defining America was his introduction of a new concept – homeland – which was echoed in his establishment of the new U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Perhaps he was borrowing from Great Britain's Homeland Secretary, but there are also echoes, likely unintended, of the Nazi concept of "motherland."

It was also interesting that Bush defined the United States metaphorically as a sleeping giant that was peaceful unless wronged and fearsome when roused, as in his statements "I like to remind people that the evil ones have roused a mighty nation, and they will pay a serious price" (Remarks to the United States Attorneys Conference, November 29, 2001) and "This Nation is peaceful, but fierce when stirred to anger" (President's Remarks to the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Service, September 14, 2001). Johnson echoed this to a lesser extent in this time-worn metaphor: "And we must let the rest of the world know that we speak softly, we carry a big stick, but we have the will and the determination, and if they ever hit us it is not going to stop us – we are just going to keep coming" (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964).

Bush also relied upon the metaphor of war as a test, as in this statement: "The resolve of our great Nation is being tested. But make no mistake: We will show the world that we will pass this test" (Remarks at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, September 11, 2001). Finally, Bush frequently relied upon the metaphor of history calling the United

States to action, part of the Manifest Destiny theme, as in this example: History has placed a great challenge before us: Will America, with our unique position and power, blink in the face of terror, or will we lead to a freer, more civilized world? There's only one answer: This great country will lead the world to safety, security, peace and freedom (Address to the Nation on the Proposed Department of Homeland Security, June 6, 2002).

These metaphors are what Schlesinger and Lau (2000) have called *condensational symbols*, which enable presidents to communicate more effectively by simplifying concepts. Their use allows presidents to overcome policy complexities, to appeal to emotions, to take advantage of public ignorance, to build broad coalitions of support and to guide their own policy choices.

Regarding the category, Coalition, these presidents seemed to share the idea that what was good for the United States was good for all. They also shared an effort to get the support of their allies, especially the United Nations, and of Congress. For example, consider this statement by Johnson: "Peace requires that we and all our friends stand firm against the present aggressions of the government of North Viet-Nam" (Remarks at Syracuse University on the Communist Challenge in Southeast Asia, August 5, 1964).

Certainly, claiming a large group of supporters makes one's cause stronger than if one fights alone, as is shown by this statement from Bush: "We are joined by a great coalition of nations to rid the world of terror" (Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 11, 2002). And world alliances, such as the United Nations, can be useful, despite the fact that the United States has been delinquent in its contributions to the U.N. and at times even hostile to it (especially under Bush).

Regarding the category of Enemy, it is notable that Bush used the most key words in this area, which speaks to the focus he had on this aspect of his war. As mentioned, Bush's enemy evolved. It began as the al Qaeda terrorists who committed the 9/11 acts, expanded to include those who mailed anthrax to various offices, grew to include the Taliban in Afghanistan, expanded further to include what Bush called the "axis of evil" (Iran, Iraq and North Korea) and finally devolved to Saddam Hussein and Iraq. For Johnson, the concept of enemy remained fairly consistent as Communism and its backers, whether that be China (especially Peking), Hanoi or the guerrilla forces within Vietnam.

Notably, both presidents fought "isms," Johnson with Communism and Bush with terrorism. But the provocation for war differed profoundly for each. Not only did Johnson inherit a war in progress, but the Gulf of Tonkin incident has been debunked by many scholars as not even occurring. In contrast, 9/11 was visible, unprecedented, astonishing, massive and profound in its horror.

Johnson's war was always against a faraway nation state, while Bush's war was at first against anonymous terrorists who struck the United States at home and then against a nation state (Iraq) that purportedly was connected to the 9/11 terrorists. Perhaps the differences discussed here, along with these presidents' unique world views and personalities, helps explain the profound dissimilarities in the category of Enemy and in other categories. If Johnson's words were directed at a nation state, rather than at a diffuse group of terrorists, he had to keep certain international accords in mind (such as the Geneva Convention) and so may have felt bound by certain protocols. He also had a more focused target. These factors may have prompted tamer language, although they did not prompt clearly focused language. For Bush, no such protocols existed, although they

became relevant later when the debate shifted to the use of torture. But at least at first, Bush's enemy was difficult to define and locate. It lacked focus. While this may have influenced Bush to use more antithetical language, the evolution of his enemy into a nation state did not necessarily prompt Bush to tame his language. If anything, it prompted even more harsh words.

Finally, the fact that each president used different terms⁵¹ to define the Enemy is not so remarkable if one considers the different times, events and personalities. Nevertheless, certain standard concepts seem to be used throughout generations in defining the enemy in a war, which has not been reflected here in the most-used terms.

The category, Job of President, was the only one in which Johnson used more key words than Bush. One might speculate that this was because Johnson was wrestling with his role as commander-in-chief and that he felt the need to talk about it. Johnson was also notable in this category for making the most references to other presidents, which may again evidence some insecurity and need for guidance. In contrast, Bush's emphasis was on being in charge, on being commander-in-chief and, curiously, on trying to seem avuncular by emphasizing love and care for others, perhaps as part of his effort to paint himself as a compassionate conservative. What stood out for Johnson was his appeal for the help of others, including citizens and other presidents, and his worries about the war (especially at night), his awareness of the sacrifice involved and his feelings of responsibility for the war. There was none of this with Bush. He never questioned the sacrifice nor seemed to worry about the war. He merely seemed determined in his mission. In all this, perhaps we are seeing the difference between a president who

⁵¹ The two presidents did share some key words in the scores of other words used to define the Enemy that did not make it into the top key words, but this study could not accommodate all words used by each president.

inherited an unpopular war in a far-flung nation (and whose reasons for escalation were questioned) and one who started a war precipitated by an outrageous attack on this nation (and rode a wave of initial solidarity). And perhaps we are seeing the difference between a president who reasoned through things more (Johnson) and one who saw things more in black and white terms and was less of an intellect (Bush).

In showing his concern for Victims (and potential victims), Johnson stood out for his worry about the Domino Theory,⁵² which predicted that if one nation fell to Communism, others would follow, as in this example:

I think it is well to remember that there are a hundred other little nations sitting here this moment watching what happens and what the outcome is in South Viet-Nam and if South Viet-Nam can be gobbled up, the same thing may happen to them (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Johnson also emphasized the supposed singular nature and calling upon the United States to help people beset by supposed injustice:

There are those who ask why this responsibility should be ours. The answer, I think, is simple. There is no one else who can do the job. Our power alone in the final test can stand between expanding Communism and independent Asian nations. Thus when India was attacked it looked to us for help and we gave it immediately. We believe that Asia should be directed by Asians, but that means that each Asian people must have the right to find its own way, not that one group or one nation should overrun all the others (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

And we again see Johnson resorting to more antiquated, dual language in his observation that when the Vietnamese men, women and children were attacked, the United States

⁵² In his "President's News Conference of April 7, 1954," President Eisenhower calls this the "falling domino principle." He says, "You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have a beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences" (Public Papers of the Presidents, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954, pp. 381-90).

made no “reply” in order to show its restraint (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965). “Reply” is a very tame word in the context of war.

In contrast, Bush’s language highlighted the innocent nature of victims, who, like the enemy, evolved from 9/11 victims, to victims of the anthrax mailings, to victims of the Taliban in Afghanistan, to victims of the so-called “axis of evil” (Iran, Iraq and North Korea) and finally to victims of Saddam Hussein. Bush’s victims were brutalized, miserable, tortured, raped, had their tongues cut out, were drenched with hot oil, etc. His language was far more strident and emotional than Johnson’s in this category.

In the category of War, what stood out was the difficulty involved in connecting Johnson’s many words about peace (sometimes in the context of foreign policy) to war. It was finally necessary to view peace as the flipside of war and code peace under War, especially when one of Bush’s top key words in defining War emerged as “peace.”

It was apparent Johnson was defensive about his war, as is seen by this statement: “Every day someone jumps up and shouts and says, ‘Tell us what is happening in Viet-Nam and why are we in Viet-Nam, and how did you get us into Viet-Nam?’ Well, I didn’t get you into Viet-Nam. You have been in Viet-Nam 10 years” (Remarks in Manchester to the Members of the New Hampshire Weekly Newspaper Editors Association, September 28, 1964). Johnson also defined the war as a duty to the world and spent a lot of time defending it, especially in his seminal speech at Johns Hopkins.

Bush, on the other hand, engaged in little hand-wringing about his war. He reminded citizens the United States was “called” by history to fight it. And he was much

more strident in his language than Johnson, referring to blackmail, terror and mass murder.

The category, Job of Citizens, arose out of Bush's claim that people were asking him what they could do to help fight terrorism. But Bush's advice seemed ludicrous in some cases. In effect, there was really little citizens could do. Thus, Bush gave them thin (and odd) responsibilities, such as fighting evil by doing good, serving others and being patient. Asking for patience co-opts citizens into trusting a leader for results, based upon facts they cannot verify. Bush also admonished citizens to shop to keep the economy going, to mentor children and to be kind to neighbors.

Johnson, on the other hand, seemed to mainly want citizens to unite and give him counsel, as he defensively defined why the United States was in Vietnam. Yet what counsel are citizens really able to give a president regarding battles and bloodshed in countries so far away? And of course both presidents advocated that citizens be alert, a statement that had far more meaning coming from Bush at a time when it was feared the nation faced more terroristic attacks. Nevertheless, what were citizens to look for? We turn now to the findings in Chapter 5 on the inherently religious words used by the two presidents.

Discussion of Empirical Findings on Religious Language From Chapter 5

Bush was more predisposed to use inherently religious language than Johnson, perhaps because of his claimed intense religious experience, the inherently religious nature of his war (begun as a religious jihad by terrorists against the United States) and by his attempt to speak to his political base. Johnson was raised with a more civil religion

mindset to follow the Golden Rule and to help the weak. Johnson's war, while against "godless" Communists (my words, not his), was not framed as such by him. Moreover, he preceded Bush by about 40 years and at a time when the nation was just beginning to talk about how it felt about the president and religion.

Thus, it is no surprise that Bush used more than four times as many inherently religious words as Johnson in roughly the same number of column inches of speech. Nevertheless, it was surprising that Johnson quoted Scripture, or alluded to it, on several occasions. Bush did this many times as well and often in a less formal way that wove Scripture into modern language to the degree that one might not recognize it if one did not know Scripture. Perhaps this was a way for Bush to speak in code to his political base.

In the category, America, what stood out was how Bush used inherently religious terms to separate the definition of America from that of the Enemy, as in this example: "Our deepest national conviction is that every life is precious because every life is the gift of a Creator who intended us to live in liberty and equality. More than anything else, this separates us from the enemy we fight" (Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 11, 2002). This technique also appears designed to appeal to Bush's political base because it subtly connected his and their anti-abortion stance to the cause of the war by emphasizing that every life was valuable, created and precious. Bush also had the additional task of making it clear to Muslims in the United States and abroad that he was not demonizing all of Islam, which could have fanned the flames of jihad.

In defining the Coalition, it is notable that Johnson used no inherently religious words. What also stood out in this category was that Bush felt the need to use the terms “Muslim” and “Islamic,” words with which Americans have little familiarity.⁵³ Bush also had to distinguish between “good” Muslims (anti-terrorists) and “bad” Muslims (terrorists).

In defining the Enemy, Bush was in high dudgeon in his use of antithetical language. He also introduced Americans to religious words they may not have been that familiar with, such as “Allah,” and Old Testament words such as “blaspheme.” In addition, Bush’s effort to broaden the definition of war as a strategy by Iraq and the terrorists to stamp out all Jews and Christians, even in Asia and Africa, was notable. He again made an effort to separate terrorists from Islam by calling them a radical fringe of Islam. He also spoke for God, much as a priest would, in defining the Enemy, even daring to define what prayers God answers and does not answer. He said of the Enemy, “They dare to ask God’s blessing as they set out to kill innocent men, women, and children. But the God of Isaac and Ishmael would never answer such a prayer” (Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly, November 10, 2001).

In defining the Job of President, Johnson stood out for his surprising variety of terms, including an odd choice of Old Testament words (“cursing,” “prophet,” “Isaiah,” “tabernacle”) and some more directly spiritual terms one might expect from Bush (“Bible,” “grace,” “heaven,” “spiritual”). In contrast, Bush stuck to fairly standard fare, although like Johnson referring to “He” and “His,” both of which connote a more personal relationship to God. Johnson quoted Scripture often and included an odd

⁵³ Many churches, including some in the researcher’s area, started Bible studies to learn about Islam after 9/11.

reference to visiting the head of the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City, Utah. Bush also quoted Scripture. Scripture was coded under the Job of President when it seemed to evidence the presidents were in a priest-like capacity.

Analysis of the Job of President category suggests that Johnson was looking for help, perhaps to justify a war he did not fully endorse. Bush seemed to present himself as seeking some guidance from God, especially through prayer, and emphasized strong Manifest Destiny themes proclaiming God as the force behind all of life and history, and both authoring and ordaining them. He also took the opportunity to again define the war as a battle between good and evil, and as a time of testing. Manifest Destiny will be discussed in more detail below.

In defining Victims, Johnson stood out for his emphasis on Manifest Destiny, and Bush stood out for his use of religion to show how victims were brutalized and how, in his words, the enemy was trying to “master the minds and souls of others.” “Others” was interpreted as referring to victims of all types, whether terrorist recruits or just plain citizens. The idea of the enemy trying to master the souls of others stood out as a highly unusual concept, as Bush explained “There is a line in our time, and in every time, between the defenders of human liberty and those who seek to master the minds and souls of others” (Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 11, 2002).

The category of War presented one of the rare times in which Johnson put Vietnam into religious context, albeit in the quest for peace. Bush again used the opportunity to characterize the battle between good and evil, to emphasize the Enemy

sought to kill all Jews and Christians, and to speak for God, much as a priest would. In the Job of Citizens category, Bush surprised by using no inherently religious terms.

A discussion of inherently religious terms used by these presidents would be incomplete without a more in-depth examination of Manifest Destiny, as this is a concept that drives a good deal of these presidents' worldviews in regards to war and is a concept that is novel to those who have not grown up in the United States.

Manifest Destiny

Manifest Destiny is an American theory that the United States is uniquely created by God to right wrongs and lead the world to justice and freedom. It was used by both presidents in this study to justify their respective wars, but more so by Bush, who used it liberally and enthusiastically. In relying upon this theory, one must assume these presidents hoped to be more persuasive by tapping into basic American indoctrination that is emotive, patriotic and religious. It also seems likely that these presidents used this concept to preclude citizen dissent.

Johnson used Manifest Destiny to explain why the United States was in Vietnam: "You are in Viet-Nam, far from the places and people you love because the forces that have given our Nation strength and wealth have also placed upon it the burden of defending freedom – even in remote and distant villages" (Christmas Message to the Americans in Viet-Nam, December 23, 1964). He further defined the role of the United States less than a month later with these words: "Our Nation was created to help strike away the chains of ignorance and misery and tyranny wherever they keep man less than God means him to be" (Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 4, 1965).

Part of the theme of Manifest Destiny is that the United States is the only one that can intervene and hold back the forces of evil in the world. In an appropriations speech given on April 4, 1965⁵⁴, Johnson illustrated this in talking about the Vietnam War:

There are those who ask why this responsibility should be ours. The answer, I think, is simple. There is no one else who can do the job. Our power alone in the final test can stand between expanding communism and independent Asian nations.

Manifest Destiny also supposedly places a unique responsibility upon the United States, as Johnson explains:

There are those who wonder why we have a responsibility there. Well, we have it there for the same reason that we have a responsibility for the defense of Europe. World War II was fought in both Europe and Asia, and when it ended we found ourselves with continued responsibility for the defense of freedom (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965).

Bush also highlighted the supposed singular nature of the United States and its responsibility to rout out evil:

This is our calling. This is the calling of the United States of America, the most free nation in the world, a nation built on fundamental values, that rejects hate, rejects violence, rejects murderers, rejects evil. And we will not tire. We will not relent. It is not only important for the homeland security of America that we succeed; it is equally as important for generations of Americans who have yet be born. Now is the time to draw the line in the sand against the evil ones. And this Government is committed to doing just that (Remarks Announcing the Most Wanted Terrorists List, October 10, 2001).

Bush also used the metaphor of history calling the United States to battle as part of this theme: “History has called America and our allies to action, and it is both our responsibility and our privilege to fight freedom’s fight” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002). He also said, “I believe there is a reason that history has matched this nation with this time. America strives to be

⁵⁴ Speech not included in the data for the study because of its limited audience.

tolerant and just. We respect the faith of Islam, even as we fight those whose actions defile that faith” (Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 11, 2002). And, as mentioned previously, Bush in his Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union on January 28, 2003, actually advanced the theory that God gives freedom to humanity through the United States, in effect defining the country as a kind of intervening Christ figure.

While all this may seem surprising (and scary) to citizens of other countries and certainly not very transportable outside the United States, it is apparent that these presidents considered Manifest Destiny as a commonly accepted truth by Americans, designed to inspire pride, purpose and, apparently, a commitment to war that the United States alone deemed necessary, based upon its unique religious calling.

Advancing the Literature

This dissertation makes contributions to the literature on problem definition, presidential leadership and political communications. One way it does this is by combining these areas of study to show how they can supplement and enhance one another. For too long public policy has ignored the importance of the communication of policy, focusing instead on the policy process itself or on certain areas of policy. This study makes the case that the communication of public policy may be just as important as the policy itself (and in some cases may be indistinguishable from it), especially when it is done by the president, and especially when it involves foreign affairs (war in particular). Yet, as has been discussed, rhetoric often not only promotes policy to the public, but it contributes to policy development, its agenda position, its legitimacy and its

evaluation. This is especially true when problems are rhetorically defined by the president, who has the powerful bully pulpit at his disposal and enormous credibility on foreign policy issues. Words indeed are the currency of the presidency. This is especially true when presidents choose their words for their emotional impact for, as Lakoff (2008) holds, emotional words, especially when repeated often, can actually change the circuitry in our brains. In addition, when presidents rhetorically define the need for war using emotional, patriotic and antithetical rhetoric that is repeated often, they can accrue more political power, even to the extent of quelling dissent. Thus, they can use rhetorical problem definition to such degrees that it becomes propaganda, as has been done by dictators such as Hitler and Mussolini.

Communication of public policy, especially by the president, has become an art form, with presidents and party operatives focus-testing and fine-tuning words and concepts. Such communication is key to what has been termed in this study “selling” policy, not only to the American public, but also to the world at-large. Not all policy is discussed publicly or in a high-profile setting. Numerous rule changes take place regularly that do not generate much public rhetoric. Congress fine-tunes laws that often do not get much public discussion. But when presidents decide to escalate our involvement in a war, or start one pre-emptively, policy “selling” must take place that emanates largely from the bully pulpit because blood, treasure, and larger security/relational concerns are at stake. To ask a country to go to war is the most important policy demand a president can make, and so he must define why the problem is so grave as to warrant war. It is to be hoped that communications scholars also will

integrate their studies with aspects of the discipline of public policy to show us even better ways to study how policy is communicated.

This work also expands the study of problem definition by looking at it in a unique way. War is not just a policy – it is a problem, meaning a situation or condition that exists, to which presidents add definition. And how that policy/problem is defined very much affects what happens, from agenda setting, to formulation, to evaluation. Further, presidents are definers-in-chief when it comes to foreign policy. And how they define a problem, the patriotic language they employ, the Manifest Destiny themes they tap into, the emotive, religious and metaphorical language they use repetitively can help them define their leadership, can encourage dialogue or quell dissent, can contract or expand their powers.

In summary, prior to this study, we knew that problem definition was a key part of the policy process, that it involved framing the issue and that it was especially powerful when it employed causal stories. We knew that presidents were key players in problem definition by virtue of their position. We knew that presidents especially were looked to for leadership in foreign policy and crisis. And we knew that presidents commanded the bully pulpit, a unique tool that gave them great influence and reach.

We now also know that when presidents try to define the need for war by using highly antithetical, patriotic, religious and emotional language, repeated frequently, they can enhance their power (perhaps disproportionately vis à vis other branches of government, and Congress in particular), quell dissent and even change our brain circuitry (Lakoff 2008). We know that we can be talked into escalating unpopular wars and into waging pre-emptive, and perhaps misguided, wars. And we know that this can

be done, to some degree, by the combination of problem definition communicated through an increasingly powerful (and perhaps dangerous) rhetorical presidency that creates a sustaining narrative. We know that presidents are problem-definers-in-chief and priests-in-chief when it comes to foreign crisis, and in particular, war. And we know that we as citizens are more manipulatable by these presidential machinations than perhaps we knew.

Suggestions for Future Research

This work provides numerous avenues for future research, primary among them the definition of problems by predicting the future, an extension of Stone's (1989) classic work on causal stories. Some investigation was done into this variant of problem definition, but there is much room for theoretical development.

Defining Problems By Predicting the Future

Stone's (1989) work on the role and power of causal stories in problem definition neglects statements about the future. It focuses instead primarily on assigning blame after an event has happened. Defining problems by predicting the future involves the creation of causal stories by probability statement. A person predicts what is likely to happen if the issue is not defined and addressed as that person sees fit. Problem definition by probability statement relies heavily upon modal verbs that predict an event or action, such as "could," "if," "is," "may," "might" and "would." In this work, any words coded under the concept of "threat" could well be seen as predictive, as threat implies something that has not happened but which could under certain conditions (as defined by the president, in this case). Indeed, "threat" always implies danger.

Thus is it no surprise that both Presidents Johnson and Bush engaged in problem definition by probability statement to different degrees to define the need for war in the various categories. Like defining the need for war, presidents have particular power when it comes to problem definition by probability statement. If they say that the reasons for war are defined as such and such, and if they further say that if we do not accept their definition that some greater danger is likely to occur, we are inclined to believe them because we trust that they have access to more information than we do and that they have our best interests in mind, especially when it comes to national security. Moreover, presidents have additional power, especially when it comes to security issues, to scare citizens into believing them. And this is largely the power of problem definition by probability statement, although one must allow that president's predictions are not always so cynical and may have basis in fact.

In this dissertation, problem definition by probability statement was observed, but it was not analyzed in the same detailed way as concepts in the various categories. There is a reason for this. Problem definition by probability statement is best delineated in context. So for this work, examples were simply provided, and a rough estimate was made of the concept's use, based upon a sampling. For example, in examining the quotes accompanying the most-used words in this work, it is estimated that Johnson used problem definition by probability statement much less than Bush, in an estimated ratio of approximately 1:11, based upon counting the number of speeches in which it was used in the various categories (and not the number of uses per column inch of speech). This count shows approximately how many speeches containing the top key words had at least one

predictive statement. This allows for the fact that, as with the other categories in this work, there could be some duplicate quotes across categories.⁵⁵

Johnson used problem definition by probability statement mostly in regards to the categories Enemy, War and Victims. Bush used predictive speech mostly in reference to the categories Coalition, Enemy and Victims. The following are examples of predictive speech used by these presidents to define the need for war or its escalation.

Examples of Johnson's Predictions Regarding the Enemy. For example, in defining the "Enemy," Johnson predicted, "Aggression and upheaval, in any part of the world, carry the seeds of destruction to our own freedom and perhaps to civilization itself" (Remarks in New York City Before the American Bar Association, August 12, 1964). He also said, "To fail to respond to these realities would reflect on our honor as a nation, would undermine worldwide confidence in our courage, would convince every nation in South Asia that it must now bow to Communist terms to survive" (Remarks on Foreign Affairs at the Associated Press Luncheon, April 20, 1964).

Example of Johnson's Predictions Regarding War. In defining War, Johnson predicted:

Second, our own security is tied to the peace of Asia. Twice in one generation we have had to fight against aggression in the Far East. To ignore aggression now would only increase the danger of a much larger war (Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 4, 1965).

Examples of Johnson's Predictions Regarding Victims. In defining Victims, Johnson predicted, "To leave Viet-Nam to its fate would shake the confidence of all these people in the value of an American commitment and in the value of America's word. The

⁵⁵ This was estimated to be about 10 percent in the data examined in this work.

result would be increased unrest and instability, and even wider war” (Address at Johns Hopkins University, April 7, 1965). He later predicted, “I think it is well to remember that there are a hundred other little nations sitting here this moment watching what happens and what the outcome is in South Viet-Nam and if South Viet-Nam can be gobbled up, the same thing may happen to them,” and also said, “Now make no mistake about it, the aim in Viet-Nam is not simply the conquest of the south, tragic as that would be. It is to show that American commitment is worthless and they would like very much to do that, and once they succeed in doing that, the gates are down and the road is open to expansion and to endless conquest. Moreover, we are directly committed to the defense of South Viet-Nam beyond any question” (Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Appropriations for Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965).

Examples of Bush’s Predictions Regarding the Coalition. In contrast, in defining the Coalition and informing them about the threat from the Enemy, Bush predicted, for example, “They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002); “We could wait and hope that Saddam does not give weapons to terrorists, or develop a nuclear weapon to blackmail the world” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, October 7, 2002); “They could also give or sell those weapons to terrorist allies, who would use them without the least hesitation” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 28, 2003); and “Another resolution is now before the Security Council. If the council responds to Iraq’s defiance with more excuses and delays, if all its authority proves to be empty, the United Nations will be severely

weakened as a source of stability and order. If the members rise to this moment, then the Council will fulfill its founding purpose” (Remarks to the American Enterprise Institute Annual Dinner, February 26, 2003).

Examples of Bush’s Predictions Regarding the Enemy. In defining the Enemy, Bush’s predictions evolved from predictively defining the terrorists who staged the attacks of 9/11, to predicting Iraq’s actions. He began in 2001 by saying, “As we meet, the terrorists are planning more murder – perhaps in my country, or perhaps in yours ... And all the world faces the most horrifying prospect of all: These same terrorists are searching for weapons of mass destruction, the tools to turn their hatred into holocaust” (Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly, November 10, 2001).

His language evolved until in 2002 he was predicting, “Secretly, without fingerprints, Saddam Hussein could provide one of his hidden weapons to terrorists, or help them develop their own. Saddam Hussein is a threat. He’s a threat to the United States of America. He’s a threat to some of our closest friends and allies. We don’t accept this threat” (Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002).

Eventually, in 2003, Bush’s problem definition by probability statement regarding Iraq, its link to terrorists in general and its threat to the world became more defined and strident, as shown in this quote: “The danger is clear: using chemical, biological or, one day, nuclear weapons, obtained with the help of Iraq, the terrorists could fulfill their stated ambitions and kill thousands or hundreds of thousands of innocent people in our country, or any other” (Address to the Nation on Iraq, March 17, 2003). The United States and its coalition would attack Iraq that same month.

Example of Bush's Predictions Regarding Victims. Aside from what was coded as top key words, the most blatant example of problem definition by probability statement came from Bush's "Address to the Nation on Iraq," delivered October 7, 2002, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Operation Iraqi Freedom would commence about six months later on March 19, 2003 (American time). In this speech, Bush combined predictions of threat, peril, risk and nuclear annihilation if his definition of the need for war was not accepted. He called upon duty. He created urgency. He projected great certainty. The prediction is a prime example of how the power of the president can be used to instill fear:

Knowing these realities, America must not ignore the threat gathering against us. Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof – the smoking gun – that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud. As President Kennedy said in October of 1962, 'Neither the United States of America, nor the world community of nations can tolerate deliberate deception and offensive threats on the part of any nation, large or small. We no longer live in a world,' he said, 'where only the actual firing of weapons represents a sufficient challenge to a nation's security to constitute maximum peril.' Understanding the threats of our time, knowing the designs and deceptions of the Iraqi regime, we have every reason to assume the worst, and we have an urgent duty to prevent the worst from occurring. Some have argued we should wait – and that's an option. In my view, it's the riskiest of all options, because the longer we wait, the stronger and bolder Saddam Hussein will become. We could wait and hope that Saddam does not give weapons to terrorists, or develop a nuclear weapon to blackmail the world. Failure to act would embolden other tyrants, allow terrorists access to new weapons and new resources, and make blackmail a permanent feature of world events. And through its inaction, the United States would resign itself to a future of fear.

As in most categories in this research, there are many, many more examples that could be given for each president, and especially for Bush. Bush may have used problem definition by probability statement more often and more intensely than Johnson because he was defining the need for a pre-emptive war, a very controversial act (and some would argue, illegal act, according to international law), while Johnson was arguing for the

escalation of a more traditional war that he inherited, and, from all accounts, was not as enthusiastic about as Bush was about his war because Johnson saw continuation of the Vietnam War as undermining his Great Society domestic programs.

Problem definition by probability statement, or the predictive story, is a powerful tool in the hands of a president, who is assumed to have the broadest view of threats. It is even more powerful when it comes to security issues, such as war, in which the president has more access to intelligence than any other official and is, by law, designated as commander in chief.

Some additional features of problem definition by probability statement, especially when presidents use it to *describe* security or foreign affairs matters, are that it involves (1) empirical statements for which the average person does not have enough confirmatory data (and elites only have that data if the president provides it to them); (2) predictions we cannot verify will happen until after the fact (and the timeline for verification may be uncertain or movable); or, (3) in some cases, normative propositions masquerading (falsely) as empirical statements/predictions. If such statements turn out to be measurably untrue by some deadline, and presidents prove to be false prophets, so to speak, it is interesting to ponder the recourse citizens have and the accountability presidents have, if any.

Thus, when presidents are inclined toward war, their predictions about what will happen if we do not accept their definitions are likely to be dire. And we, who presume the president has superior knowledge of foreign policy and security issues, are more likely to accept that definition of policy and go along. As Lakoff (2008) says, someone is using that fear to advantage.

Recently, some scholars have touched on problem definition by probability statement, although they have not done so in regards to presidential rhetoric pertaining to war. These scholars have argued that political rhetoric consists of arguments about what will happen if a particular policy is passed or not passed (Lau, Smith and Fiske 1991; Riker 1990, 1996; Jerit 2002). Jerit (2002) says “elites have an incentive to focus on the future because this is where citizens are most uncertain – and uncertainty implies persuadability” (19). As no one knows for sure the outcome of a specific policy, predictive rhetoric provides “certainty” (Riker 1990). Lau et al. (1991) maintain that “the most frequently attempted manipulation ... consists of a set of arguments about the consequences of a policy proposal (645).

Riker (1996) draws upon decision theory to argue that elites focus on the future because citizen outcome preferences are influenced by the presentation of, in many cases, dire alternatives (Allais 1979; Einhorn and Hogarth 1986; Ellsberg 1961; Kahneman, Tversky and Slovic 1982; Markowitz 1952; Quattrone and Tversky 1988). Jerit (2002) gives an example: “It is well known that people subjectively overestimate the likelihood of low-probability events, especially events with undesirable outcomes. Thus, elites who seek to *quash support* for a legislative proposal need only argue that a proposal is ‘risky’ or make drastic predictions about the negative consequences of a bill. It does not matter if the probability of these events is so low as to be virtually indistinguishable from zero; risks that are statistically microscopic can nevertheless prompt a very substantial *visceral reaction* (italics mine) (20). Thus, the deep emotional reaction elites can solicit through carefully chosen rhetoric can be so powerful as to quash dissent.

This psychology of rhetoric is not new in American culture. In studying the U.S. Constitution, Riker (1996) found elites tried to take advantage of what Jerit (2002) calls “this inherent aversion to unpleasant outcomes” (20). For instance, “Federalists argued that the nation was disintegrating under the Articles of Confederation, and that unless the Constitution was ratified, there would be civil and foreign war, economic decline, and confiscation of property. In response, Anti-Federalists predicted that the proposed consolidation would destroy traditional liberties, shield elected officials from popular control and result in oligarchy. It is clear, in other words, that both sides sought to take advantage of citizens’ risk aversion to making drastic predictions about events that were highly unlikely” (Jerit 2002, 20-21). Interestingly, Anti-Federalists tended to rely more on negative appeals.

Somewhat similarly, Ben-Porath (2007) found that “in building the case for imminent war, presidents turn to narrative descriptions of specific atrocities, namely rape, torture and victimization of children, [while by] the same token presidents wishing to avoid American involvement in war use abstract terms and statistical information concerning human rights crises, but refrain from detailing personalized stories of abuse” (181).

This study invites researchers to go beyond Jerit, Riker, Stone and others to merge the study of presidential rhetoric with that of problem definition and predictions of what is likely to happen, or not happen, if we do or do not accept a president’s arguments for the policy of war.

Other Areas of Potential Research

Other areas of potential future research involve the ways in which presidents may use rhetorical problem definition and/or rhetorical problem definition by probability statement to enhance the powers of the president (potentially at the expense of the other branches of government, thus upsetting the balance of power) and increase their personal authority. One way presidents can do this is by saying they are encountering something unprecedented, which only they know how to handle. Both Johnson and Bush did this. If something is new and different, if there is a new era, if there are new responsibilities, leaders may seek greater power to help us navigate this territory and define it for us. Johnson highlights this in his Remarks to Committee Members on the Need for Additional Military Purposes in Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic, May 4, 1965: “This is not the same kind of aggression which the world has long been used to. Instead of the sweep of invading armies there is the steady and the deadly attack in the night by guerrilla bands that come without warning, that kill people while they sleep.” Bush does the same in his Address to the Nation From Atlanta on Homeland Security on November 8, 2001: “We have entered a new era, and this new era requires new responsibilities, both for the Government and for our people. The Government has a responsibility to protect our citizens, and that starts with homeland security.”

In addition, research is certainly warranted (and was done during this study, although not included in the final work) on how the assassination of President Kennedy for Johnson and 9/11 for Bush were parallel in many ways, as they were both events that propelled these presidents into their wars.

Certainly more study needs to be done of the rhetorical devices used by presidents to define the need for war, including symbols, metaphors and frames. Strong metaphors for Bush, for instance, were that “freedom” and “fear” were at war and that the battle was between “good” and “evil” and “justice” versus “cruelty.” Various authors and commentators are starting to write about the consequences of promoting a polarized world view that is black versus white, when in fact the world is many shades of black and white. Another strong metaphor for Bush involved “weapons of mass destruction,” first used by him in his November 10, 2001, Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly: “And all the world faces the most horrifying prospect of all: These same terrorists are searching for weapons of mass destruction, the tools to turn their hatred into holocaust. They can be expected to use chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons the moment they are capable of doing so. No hint of conscience would prevent it.”

More research could be conducted as to how presidential rhetorical problem definition discourages or even quells dissent, especially as regards security issues. One way this study elucidated the attempt by the two presidents to quell dissent was in showing the way they defined the country and the coalition as united, sometimes in the process of presenting a request for increased authority, funding or support. Declaring unity, or calling for it, can have the effect of co-opting coalition members and quelling dissent. For instance, in a speech on September 25, 2001, to Federal Bureau of Investigation employees,⁵⁶ Bush said:

There are some other things we can do in the country, and our Congress needs to work with us. And I believe – I had breakfast this morning with Republican and Democrat leaders, and I will tell you, the spirit on Capitol Hill is good for America. It’s a united spirit, and I want to thank the leaders from both parties and both Houses for their willingness to listen to

⁵⁶ Speech not included in the data for the study because of its limited audience.

anybody who has got a good idea about how to fight terrorist activity in the country ... And so I hope Congress will listen to the wisdom of the proposals that the Attorney General brought up, to give the tools necessary to our agents in the field to find those who may think they want to disrupt America again ... And we're asking for the authority to share information between intelligence operations and law enforcement, so we can direct the best of both in the critical effort. That, too, is a reasonable request to make of Congress. I want you to know that every one of the proposals we've made on Capitol Hill, carried by the Attorney General, has been carefully reviewed. They are measured requests; they are responsible requests; they are constitutional requests. Ours is a land that values the constitutional rights of every citizen, and we will honor those rights, of course ... But we're at war, a war we're going to win. And in order to win the war, we must make sure that the law enforcement men and women have got the tools necessary, within the Constitution, to defeat the enemy.

And in a speech on September 26, 2001, to Central Intelligence Agency employees, Bush said, "The cooperation with Capitol Hill is unique and, I hope, lasting ... There's deep concern amongst Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill to do what's right for America – to come together to provide the necessary support for an effective war."⁵⁷

Bush also defined the American people as united. On October 10, 2001, in Remarks Announcing the Most Wanted Terrorists List, he said, "We're united. People of all faiths, all religions, all areas of our country are united in the common effort to stamp out evil where we find it. It is the right thing to do." And On October 11, 2001, he told Department of Defense employees,⁵⁸ "But now, as then, we can be certain of the outcome because we have a number of decisive assets. We have a unified country." Certainly, it is harder to go against a president when he talks as if everyone is united in protecting the country.

⁵⁷ Speech not included in the data for the study because of its limited audience.

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The effect of this type of speech and other efforts to quell dissent were that those who spoke out were often singled out as unpatriotic, especially in the early stages of the Iraq War. This was typified by the incident involving the female vocal group, the Dixie Chicks, whose audience was largely country music fans in the heartland, generally more conservative and part of the Bush base. On the eve of the war, lead singer Natalie Maines told a crowd in London that she was “ashamed” that Bush was from her home state of Texas. The Dixie Chicks subsequently had to cancel fourteen engagements in the U.S. heartland as country music fans protested their “unpatriotic” behavior by refusing to buy tickets or their CDs. In addition, hundreds of radio stations across middle America refused to play their songs. And country music stations publicly boycotted the Dixie Chicks and organized publicity stunts that included crushing their CDs with a tractor. Meanwhile, sympathizers began buying their albums and coined the term “dixie-chicked” to refer to those whose publicly stated views, especially against the war, prompted a backlash. By 2006, the tenor had changed. The Dixie Chicks released a CD with the song “Not Ready to Make Nice” that chronicled their travails over the incident, which included the death threats they received. Maines said she was “still mad as hell” at the backlash over stating her opinions. Other performers, namely Neil Young and the Rolling Stones, also began taking an anti-Bush tone, but their fan base had always been more compatible with their political beliefs. Interestingly, countries such as Australia, Canada and Great Britain had welcomed the group throughout the controversy, indicating that aspects of the coalition were never as strong as Bush stated (Gumbel 2006). Another way presidents can quell dissent is by using extreme language to evoke the maximum fear, as Bush did frequently when he warned predictively that “These same terrorists are searching for

weapons of mass destruction, the tools to turn their hatred into holocaust” (Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City, November 10, 2001).

Another area warranting more research involves expanding problem definition to other areas of policy (and campaigning, for that matter), and not just by presidents, but also by other government actors. And it could also be expanded to examine how presidents set agendas and evaluate policy. The development of narratives could be further investigated by carefully chronicling the evolution of definitions, which has been done to some extent here. And more research can and certainly will be done to examine how communication of policy affects us physiologically, as Lakoff has begun to elucidate. There can be no doubt that language, especially in the hands of a president who advocates war, is powerful.

Still other areas of research may be directed to the religious side of presidential speech, including the use by presidents of direct quotes or direct references to Scripture. Has the use of religious rhetoric by presidents changed or increased over time? If so, does this mean presidents are becoming more religious, or that presidents are finding the use of religious rhetoric more useful, or a myriad other possibilities?

And finally, further investigation could be made into the effect of the media on rhetorical problem definition by presidents, including whether the media are “an intervening variable between public opinion and foreign policy, or primarily a conveyor belt for messages from the elite to the public” (see Baum and Potter 2008, 40); whether the rise of alternative television viewing choices brought about by cable television has reduced the audience and the influence of presidential rhetoric over the public agenda (see Young and Perkins 2005); and whether the variable impact of televised presidential

addresses on media attention has affected the president's power to set an agenda (see Peake and Eshbaugh-Soha 2008).

Limitations of the Research

One of the main limitations of this research is that it does not propose cause and effect. Just because these presidents tried to talk us into war by employing the many devices discussed does not mean they were successful in getting complete buy-in by their respective audiences. Showing presidential speech affects public opinion is difficult to do, as pointed out earlier. But what we do know is that presidents and their staffs take extreme care in choosing the words they use to communicate policy, and therefore we must assume these presidents thought these ways of trying to talk us into war would be most effective. And by their choices, it appears they sought to quell the most dissent and co-opt the greatest numbers of their various audiences to their cause. Thus, the researcher's job is to make sure that she categorizes and codes the appropriate data in the best way possible to show the apparent design behind the words.

Another limitation involves the fact that this study focuses only on the top key words under each category, although there were scores of other words used by each president in almost every category. Nevertheless, every study of necessity has to limit the amount of data it analyzes.

Summary and Discussion

The research questions for this work focused on (1) how the two presidents used rhetoric to try to talk us into war, (2) how their addresses were similar and different in

terms of the words and emphases they used, and (3) how they framed their causal stories in terms of who (or what) was to blame for the circumstances or events precipitating the war/conflict. The latter question stems from Stone's (1988, 1989) assertion that at the heart of successful problem definition is the causal story, which identifies the harm done, describes its cause, assigns moral blame and claims government is responsible for the remedy. In crafting an effective causal story, Stone says problem definers must translate difficult conditions into problems that are amenable to human action, and do it in a way that wins over the most people and gives them the most leverage over their opponents.

In looking at how presidents define the need for war, it is clear that Johnson and Bush followed Stone's formula, although to different degrees, with Bush using more antithetical, religious, patriotic and emotive language than Johnson in most cases, as well as using more key words in general to define the problem. It is also clear that these presidents chose their words carefully, and one can only conclude they did so in a way designed to be the most persuasive and quell dissent, with Bush going far further than Johnson in both areas once again.

In bringing this work to an end, it is worth noting that Patton (2002) tells us there is no formula for transformation of qualitative analysis data into findings or conclusions, as each study is unique. Numerous guidelines abound, he says, but they are not rules, and their application requires judgment and creativity. Scholarly qualitative research, he adds, emphasizes the published literature, which contributes to the initial design. It is therefore revisited in analysis.

As regards grounded theory, Patton (2002) says it begins with basic description, moves to conceptual organizing of the data into discrete categories and finally culminates

in theory generation. The latter involves developing, or intuiting, ideas and concepts, and then formulating them into a “logical, systematic and explanatory scheme” (490).

Grounded theory relies upon imageric concepts that are easy to apply. “They are applied ... with a feeling of ‘knowing’ ... They ring true with great credibility ... They feel theoretically complete” (Patton 2002, 491). Strauss and Corbin (1998) add that:

In doing our analyses, we conceptualize and classify events, act and outcomes. The categories that emerge, along with their relationships, are the foundations for our developing theory ... Doing line-by-line coding through which categories, their properties and relationships emerge automatically takes us beyond description and puts us into a conceptual mode of analysis (66).

Qualitative analysis is “grounded in thick description,” “balanced by analysis and interpretation” (Patton 2002, 503). Patton (2002) adds, “The analyst should help readers understand different degrees of significance of various findings, if these exist” (504).

Analysts may also use metaphors and analogies to convey meaning. Finally, Wolcott (1990) warns about being too certain about conclusions in qualitative research:

Give serious thought to dropping the idea that your final chapter must lead to a conclusion or that the account must build toward a dramatic climax ... In reporting qualitative work, I avoid the term *conclusion*. I do not want to work toward a grand flourish that might tempt me beyond the boundaries of the material I have been presenting or detract from the power (and exceed the limitations) of an individual case (55).

By revealing the pattern behind the words of these two presidents through thick description, a good deal of meaning has emerged, including similarities and differences in how these presidents tried to talk us into war. Despite their separation in service by decades, these presidents used some of the same concepts and key words, perhaps because commonalities of thought are passed down through each generation, regardless

of the conflict. Perhaps presidents also build upon language that they believe has been effective for past presidents and perfect that inherited rhetoric through focus-group testing and other methods. In any case, both presidents' rhetoric produced similar categories, and in some cases the presidents used the same key words. Each used language that was antithetical, patriotic, emotive, metaphorical, co-opting and religious. Each president, as Bostdorff (1994) says, named the issue so that their proposed policy seemed to be the best solution. Each president defined the problem as a crisis to give it urgency and to enable him to more easily call upon citizen sacrifice and unity (Bostdorff 1994). It is just that Bush did more of this and in more pronounced fashion than did Johnson.

Thus, expectations that Johnson would speak in less extreme terms than Bush were confirmed. Indeed, the tests of binomial proportions reveal that Bush was far more likely than Johnson to use terms to define all categories of secular language, except the Job of President, and all categories of inherently religious language, except the Job of Citizens. Bush was more likely to emphasize what Bostdorff calls a menacing crisis that threatens American lives and principles, at the same time deflecting troubling questions about ethicality (1994).

These presidents also made repeated references to unity, especially with Congress, but also with their coalitions and with the American people. Kernell (1997) theorizes that presidents increasingly go public in a belief they can better influence the public through their speech, but Eshbaugh-Soha (2006) says that presidents do not so much rally public support through their speech as they seek to influence the votes of members of Congress and signal policy preferences to highly placed bureaucrats. This

study points to the likelihood that presidents must also think they are persuasive with coalition leaders and with the American people when it comes to war policy, or they would not speak to them repeatedly and use word repetition.

Despite their commonalities, each president made choices to talk more or less about the war, to emphasize certain aspects more or less. Johnson spoke less about his war, and did so in more general terms, or in a broader context, than Bush. Bush made so many speeches preparing us for war that culling his speeches was a feat in itself. Johnson also was less repetitive than Bush, who often used the same language over and over.

Each was propelled into their respective wars by events beyond their control – for Johnson, the assassination of President Kennedy, which thrust him into the presidency, for Bush the unprecedented horror of 9/11. Yet they fought different wars in different times. Johnson inherited a war he did not create and that conflicted with his Great Society programs. Bush created his war, and launched it pre-emptively.

In sheer tone alone, Johnson appears the reluctant warrior, more concerned with prevention, peace and deterrence than war. He seems less secure with his war and with his role in it. He is more philosophical, more like the gentleman engaged in a duel. In contrast, Bush is the eager warrior, bent upon war, secure in his role as commander-in-chief and brimming with conviction. He speaks in simple, direct, informal language.

Bush's policy rhetoric falls more in line with Lowi's description of social regulatory policy, as characterized by "radical" politics. Lowi notes that "for the radical, conduct is to be regulated because it is good or bad in itself." The goal of radical policy is the complete elimination of conduct. Radicalists see social regulatory policy in terms of "sin" (Tatalovich and Daynes 2005, xiv). Perhaps this is because, as Tatalovich and

Daynes say about domestic policy, Republicans tend more than Democrats to exploit social regulatory issues to mobilize their base (1988). Thus, it seems more likely that rhetoric promoting social regulatory policy, especially in the hands of Republicans, may be more black and white, patriotic and religious (Edelman 1980). Yet elites must go beyond ideological arguments if they want to appeal to more than their supporters (Converse 1964), which may be why both presidents' rhetoric devolved to the simplest message to cancel out what Ferejohn calls "random components" (1990, 14). Ferejohn (1990) also notes that "information is retained in rough proportion to the existing stock of information on the topic," which suggests one reason presidents might repeat their messages – so that receivers are more likely to retain and accept them.

Lakoff (2008) suggests another reason for repetition. He says presidential speech has particular power in times of trauma. Such speech is so powerful that, when repeated often, it can forever change the brain's synapses and create neural binding, a process that can only be ameliorated by inhibiting those connections by alternative language. Thus, says Lakoff (2008), we cannot "freely choose not to think certain thoughts when certain words are used and when [our] brain is tuned to active those thoughts." And so rhetoric as used by these presidents, and especially by Bush (who used more of it), potentially undermines the very freedom they say they are fighting for (19).

Both presidents spoke in antithetical language to define the need for war and to define the players, but Johnson was much less strident than Bush, whose words were stark in their contrast. For Bush, there were no grays, just a world of black and white, of good versus evil. This antithetical difference extended to their predictive definitions, with Bush producing language more laden with fear, to the point where his enemy was

supposedly desirous to kill off all Jews, Christians and Americans and to unleash a nuclear mushroom cloud. We are reminded by Edwards and Wayne (2003) that during a crisis presidents evoke strong emotions in their rhetoric, use simple language and present a case of good versus evil. For Bush, it seemed easier to personify America and dehumanize the enemy, as Wander (1984) discusses, even resorting to the images of savagery that Ivie (1980) has observed in presidential war rhetoric. And Bostdorff's (1994) study rings true in its conclusion that antithetical appeals characterizing the enemy as both evil and threatening rule out appeasement, increase the chances the innocent will suffer and allow blame for the bloodshed to be placed upon others. Antithetical language narrows policy options. And, as Holsti and Fagen (1967) point out, painting the enemy as evil allows a nation to be self-righteous and to justify any means used to win, thus enhancing the tendency to use religious arguments and language. Antithetical language also tends to portray a people as a monolithic bloc, as Bostdorff notes (1994), thus reducing individualism (and again, freedom).

Indeed, when Tatalovich and Daynes say that “public policy is often a reaction to the perceived scope of the problem and/or the salience of the issue” (in Haider-Markel and O'Brien 1997, 553), we can add that such scope and salience can be enhanced by the use of antithetical language, symbols and causal stories.

For Johnson, however, it was more difficult to find a convincing rationale for escalating the war he inherited, as the traditional moral arguments used by previous presidents seemed inappropriate and ineffective (Turner 1985; Vaughn 1985). This is largely because, as Turner says, the national press “gravitated from an initial position of essential disinterest concerning Vietnam to one that was in large measure actively hostile

to presidential policy (5). Moreover, Johnson “tried to walk a line between those on the Right who wanted more forceful military action and those on the Left who wanted the United States to withdraw” (Vaughn 1985, 617).

Johnson’s language, while patriotic, was not full of the bravado and confidence seen with Bush. He was less emotive, less metaphorical, less co-opting and less religious in tone than Bush, while at times surprising us with his scriptural knowledge. Bush was highly emotive in his choices of words, drawing liberally on metaphor. He had a wider definition of those whom he co-opted into his cause (his coalition) and was more personal in his religious language. Both drew upon Manifest Destiny themes and quoted or alluded to Scripture, but Bush used religious language more liberally, more personally and less formally. Unlike Johnson, Bush had had a personal religious experience, and it showed. Bush’s religious language was Armageddon-like, weaving in fundamentalist, neo-conservative philosophy in a way that spoke to his base, to the general American public and to the world at the same time. In this, he was quite masterful.

Both spoke in language that could pre-empt dissent, but Bush had the advantage of the unprecedented 9/11 attacks and the American desire for revenge, unlike Johnson. And thus Bush’s pre-war language brooked no dissent, even though some dissent arose after the enemy changed from the terrorists to Saddam Hussein and Iraq. In contrast, Johnson continued to explain why we were in Vietnam and pointed out he did not get us there. Nevertheless, as Bostdorff (1994) points out, once a president defines a problem as a crisis, opposition to his definition is difficult, leaving the opposition to attack the president’s definition before they attack the policy, yet reluctant to criticize the

commander-in-chief for fear of being disunified or unpatriotic in the face of danger to the country.

We have seen in this study how presidents used war rhetoric to talk about their duties and responsibilities, especially as commander-in-chief, in the same way that Bostdorff says presidents do in foreign crises when they refer to their office, their title and their responsibilities to legitimize their policy definitions. Indeed, it was out of this emphasis that the grounded theory category Job of Presidents grew. But, as Bostdorff notes, such references also function as authoritative appeals to forestall questions and criticism, as presidents argue that they alone have the necessary expertise and power to make the right decisions and urge citizens to defer to them. Such uses of “we,” “nation” and “America” help citizens identify with the president and encourage group conformity, she says. They discourage dissent, especially when presidents invoke national myths. And indeed, especially in the early stages of a crisis, opposition to the president and his office can be viewed as traitorous. This is much more so when that crisis is a war (Bostdorff 1994). Baum and Potter (2008) add that “typically, public attention to foreign policy ... is very low, resulting in an equilibrium favorable to leaders[,]” ... especially ... in the early stages of a military conflict” (43). The authors call this a “well-documented,” “short-term” “rally round the flag” effect that “favors leaders” (Baum and Potter 2008, 43).

Perhaps linked to this crisis aspect, we see differences in confidence experienced by these two presidents, who are studied in somewhat different stages of their respective wars. Johnson, engaged in pre-escalation and not pre-war, worries over his war and his “boys,” shows signs of wrestling with his presidency and speaks more about other

presidents. A pre-war Bush, on the other hand, seems entirely comfortable in his role as commander-in-chief and never questions the reasons for a pre-emptive assault. He speaks rarely about other presidents.

The use of more inherently religious terms by Bush is in keeping with Bostdorff's (1994) study of presidential crisis rhetoric showing that presidents can deflect dissent by infusing military intervention with moral and even sacred purpose, reinforcing American myths of mission and Manifest Destiny. Wars can too easily become the defense of moral ideals. This is also in keeping with social regulatory policy, which Lowi observes is "more ideological, more moral, more directly derived from fundamental values, more intense, less utilitarian, more polarized and less prone to compromise (in Tatalovich and Daynes 2005, xiii). Tatalovich and Daynes (1998) say social policy also exercises legal authority to modify or replace moral values and norms with new standards. With Bush, the treatment of social regulatory policy not only took the form of more moralistic rhetoric, but also the controversial use of pre-emptive war against a perceived threat. And in this we are reminded that, as Risse (1999) points out, political rhetoric tends to emphasize the "moral rightness of the norms underlying arguments" as part of its validity claims (5). Wei (2000) reminds us political rhetoric is "both an expression of emotion and an appeal to others to become emotionally involved," with emphasis on patriotism as a way to encourage uncritical acceptance of a problem definition (96). It is also a means to engage in unreflective policy making (Ivie 2007). The latter worked particularly well for Bush, who Ivie (2007) says "spoke to a Christian America in the language of a Christian man crusading for a righteous cause by declaring an unrestricted war on evil (223). Bush's post 9/11 world was "governed by theistic essence, "filled with heroes and

villains, divided by good and evil, and given purpose by God's will, which was to be fulfilled by people of faith and character opposed to evil" (Ivie 2007, 223-4). For Bush, this provided "providential certainty," which "supplanted critical thought" (Ivie 2007, 223-4). And thus people questioned Bush's war less, at least at the beginning. As presidents' rhetorical styles reflect their leadership personality, according to Hart (1984), we are reminded that those who prize reason appeal to logic and rationality (more in line with Johnson), while those who value morality appeal to faith and scriptural ideas (more in line with Bush).

Johnson's "soft religiosity," as Balmer (2008, 49-50) calls it, was no match for the linguistic talents of Bush in this regard. And this may have been why he was perceived to have less moral leadership in his war because "bloody military interventions apparently become more palatable to citizens, even heroic, when presidents can successfully imbue them with moral purpose" (Bostdorff 1994, 210) and even apocalyptic imagery, and when they so tightly control the policy environment by releasing only minimal amounts of empirical information, even disallowing television coverage of the returning caskets of soldiers, as Bush did. When presidents attribute morality to a nation by claiming it is chosen by God, and assume the cloak of priest-in-chief, they have wide latitude to define problems and address them as they see fit, under the guise of bringing the blessings of such inheritance to the world. They are, as Blanchard (1978) puts it, free from all restraint.

Such a worldview is difficult to contradict, and may be offensive to others. Thus, Shogan (2002) is right to argue that "moral and religious rhetoric should not be viewed simply as a reflection of presidential character or as a fulfillment of American 'civil

religion,' but as a strategic tool to enhance independent power and authority" (iii). So we can assume that presidents who engage heavily in this moral and religious rhetoric are actually seeking more power and do not want their authority on policies questioned. This especially seems the case with Bush and his war policies.

What is more, this "rhetoric of virtue," as Sichertman (2007) calls it, allows presidents to vaguely appeal to people across faiths, especially because the American civil religion of exceptionalism and universalism does not export well outside the United States. It may initially be useful for coalition building, but it can also be divisive, demonize the opposition and define who is considered a "real American" (Lawton 2003). Internally, it appeals to the myth of Manifest Destiny, a sanctioning of action by God and history that unites and justifies any "rightly guided action," (Rhys and Alexander 1994, 4), as defined here by the president, who functions as a type of priest, especially in trying times (Lawton 2003). Indeed, Slotkin (1973) reminds us that Americans historically have seen violence as a means of regeneration.

Schneider and Ingram's (1990) reminder that public policy almost always attempts to get people to do what they would not otherwise have done holds particularly true for war. That is why, according to these authors, people are more likely to take action to support policy goals if they are promoted by government officials as important and high priority, consistent with their values, beliefs and preferences, and supported by positive symbols and images that emphasize the positive parts of the policy and minimize the negative parts.

In making the case for war, these two presidents' causal stories bear a basic similarity. And here we hark back to Stone (1989), the preeminent scholar of causality in

problem definition. Stone calls the causal story the essence of successful problem definition in that it outlines the harm done, stipulates who or what is to blame and labels who has responsibility for the remedy in a way designed to win over the most people. This is part of what Hoekstra (1999) calls a president's "sustaining narrative."

In this study, each president painted a picture of America as an inherently good nation, an example to others, called by God to right wrongs and point the way to peace and prosperity. They spoke of a nation with good intentions, peaceful by nature, not aggressive unless provoked, and reluctant to engage in hostility. They portrayed the United States as all-powerful and as a leader of world democracies.

In contrast, they framed the enemy as bad, less civilized and less organized. Its attacks were unprovoked and unjust. Moreover, the enemy treats its own people unjustly. And it is desirous of power. Its victims are pathetic and want help.

It is the role of America as the world leader of freedom to quench the enemy and free the victims. War, or continuation of war, is the only answer. America goes to war with the full support of a broad coalition, at home and abroad, according to these presidents. As president and commander-in-chief, they ask us to trust them because they alone have the knowledge and vision to know what is needed. Our job as citizens is to support the war and not question our leaders.

While both presidents played out a version of this, Bush's version was more audacious than Johnson's, to the point of bordering on caricature. To Bush, America was purely good, while the enemy was purely evil and even inhuman. His victims were profoundly tortured, especially the women and children, and were highly desirous of freedom, American-style. His coalition was multi-faceted, large and wholly on board.

War was not only the only answer, but it was a holy calling. As president, he alone had all the answers. The job of citizens was to unquestioningly support America, the war and him as their unflinching president and extremely confident commander-in-chief.

As Gardner (1995) tells us, good leaders tell dynamic unfolding stories “about themselves and their groups, about where they were coming from and where they were headed, about what was to be feared, struggled against and dreamed about.” These leaders are the “principal characters or heroes” in their own stories (14). And we see this in the case of presidents talking us into war, but in Bush more so.

As Bostdorff (1994) tells us, presidents in foreign crisis mode construct a story wherein the United States is described as passive, desirous of peace and the welfare of others, retaliatory only as a last resort when attacked, to preserve both itself and other nations of goodwill. This narrative has the United States fully capable and determined to defend itself, with the crises presented as a test of national will, and with emphasis on the American character rather than the consequences of war. The United States is the victim, and the enemy is responsible for the crisis. The enemy is defined as diabolical. This narrative seeks to rally unity and support, while also deflecting responsibility for the U.S. contribution to the crisis. Finally, presidents ask to be evaluated in terms of progress that they alone define. Their inflated rhetoric expands their power in foreign affairs at the expense of Congress.

And certainly in times of crisis, including war, “followers thirst for leadership, they are highly suggestible by the ideas forcefully expressed and vividly embodied by a leader; they have strong emotional attachments to leaders” (Goethals 2005, 557). As Edwards and Wayne (2003) remind us, leaders also may “frequently invoke the names of

revered leaders of the past who made difficult decisions on the basis of high principles” (135). And as leaders begin to feel their will and that of the nation are “isomorphic,” as Hart (1984) puts it, they believe themselves to be America incarnate, allowing them to accrue even more power. Successful crisis promotion increases a president’s personal credibility, supply of public goodwill and symbolic reserve, which he can then bank on for future use (Bostdorff 1994). Thus, leadership is about persuasion to accept a president’s definition of the problem and of himself.

In all this, it is worth remembering that one of the three activities of problem definition is framing the condition as a problem amenable to intervention (Weimer 1993), that not only is the function of problem definition in political discourse to explain, describe and recommend, but it is above all to persuade (Rochefort and Cobb 1994). One way presidents do this is to create condensational symbols that can transcend meaning for large numbers of people (typical of Bush), rather than referential symbols that rely more on facts (more typical of Johnson) (Rochefort and Cobb, 1994). These value concerns tap into images familiar to target populations, given that they are based upon stereotypes portrayed through symbolic language, metaphors and stories (Schneider and Ingram 1993).

In speaking of problem definition, Rochefort and Cobb (1994) also help us distinguish between Bush’s style of being more expressive, which they call a defense of moral values, and Johnson’s style of being more instrumental, or focusing on rational problem solving. Edwards and Wayne (2003) remind us that, using the power of the bully pulpit, especially in times of foreign crises, presidents have the power not only to reflect widely held views, but to intensify them and exploit them. They can, as Page and Shapiro

(1999) put it, promote misleading, distorted or false information. They can manipulate symbols to lead and mislead public opinion (Edwards and Wayne 2003). They can create moral frames, and then fit policy to them (Lakoff 2008). Such frames interact with our memory to prime certain considerations, raise the priority and weight we give to ideas already in our consciousness, making them less subject to distortion by journalists and opponents than do direct persuasion (Edwards and Wayne 2003). These frames draw upon stereotypes that determine policy agendas and create “us” versus “them” categories (Schneider and Ingram 1993).

Kay (2003) reminds us that policymakers filter out what they consider inconvenient language in defining problems. They may intensify their narrative descriptions by speaking of atrocities if they want to promote war (more typical of Bush), or they may use more abstract and statistical information if they want to avoid war, or, I would add, are conflicted about war (more typical of Johnson). Presidents also can create stereotypical images of perceived enemies that tap into pervasive American narratives (Doherty 1999, Robin 2001, Whitfield 1996), including what Lakoff (2008) calls the “deep Rescue narrative” we see so often when presidents define the need for war. In this rescue narrative, Lakoff (2008) says presidents become skillful manipulators of metaphor. He cites in particular Bush’s “war on terror” metaphor, calling it carefully chosen for maximum impact at a time when the nation was vulnerable following a trauma. Unlike literal wars against nations or insurgents, metaphorical wars can be endless because there is no military end to an emotional state. As Lakoff (2008) puts it, the war on terror “was used by the Bush administration as a ploy to get virtually unlimited war powers – and further domestic influence – for the president ... because the

mention of ‘terror’ activates a fear response, and fear activates a conservative worldview, in which there is a powerful leader, willing to use his strength, who offers protection and security” [and rescue] (126). Lakoff (2008) continues,

The war metaphor defined war as the only way to defend the nation. From within it, being against war as a response was to be unpatriotic, to be against defending the nation ... The war metaphor put progressives on the defensive. Once it took hold, any refusal to grant the president full authority to conduct the war would open progressives in Congress to the charge of being unpatriotic, unwilling to defend America, defeatist – traitorous. And once the military went to battle, the war metaphor created a new reality that reinforced itself. The war metaphor allowed the president to assume war powers, which made him politically immune from serious criticism and gave him extraordinary domestic power to carry the agenda to the radical right: Power to shift money and resources away from social needs to the military and related industries. Power to override environmental safeguards on the grounds of military need. Power to set up a domestic surveillance system to spy on our citizens and to intimidate political enemies. Power over political discussion, since war trumps all other topics. In short, power to reshape America to the vision of the radical right – with no end date (126).

Finally, Lakoff (2008) says, Bush used the war on terror metaphor to justify the invasion of Iraq. But, he notes, it was the chief right-wing language technician, Frank Luntz, who led the charge to refer to the Iraq War as the main front in the “war on terror” (126-7). And it was the power of that metaphor, and the concomitant extension to the word “terrorist,” that, through repetition following trauma, evoked a permanent change in the synapses of people’s brains so that it became used reflexively, not reflectively. In other words, such presidential words caused physical change in Americans that reduced their ability to reason.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ “The basis of Lakoff’s theory is simple: The mind is the brain. Any connection that forms between your thoughts also forms between your neurons. As you internalize a metaphor, a circuit in your brain ‘physically constitutes the metaphor.’ This parallel development continues as mental complexity increases. ‘Narratives are brain structures,’ he proposes” (Saletan 2008). Lakoff’s work is a theoretical merging of the principles of cognitive linguistics and neuroscience more in line with communications theory, rather than a scientific testing.

The framers of the Constitution feared direct or pure democracy, typified by, among other factors, popular rhetoric on a mass scale. This they thought would undermine the rational and enlightened self-interests of citizens (Cronin 1982). While this may no longer be a concern, perhaps it should be, especially when citizens and others repeatedly are subjected to highly emotive, religious, metaphorical, antithetical presidential war rhetoric.

The power of such language in the hands of a president, as part of crisis promotion, gives cause for worry about what Bostdorff (1994) calls an imperial presidency: “Presidents have used foreign crises to accrue more power and, in turn, have relied on public and congressional acceptance of power usurpation to promote more crises” (2). Like Bush, these presidents “involve the nation in military intervention in other countries almost at will” (Bostdorff 1994, 2). They use “their discourse about foreign crises to ... [allow] them to expand their powers and to enhance their political standing” (Bostdorff 1994, 207). This “relationship between power and discourse appears to be symbiotic,” Bostdorff (1994, 234) concludes.

What happens to democracy when presidents employ such powerful language to talk us into war? Where is there room for dissent? What happens to reasoned debate? What does it mean for world relations?

This is the power of presidential language – to not only talk us into war but also to quash dissent, greatly enhance executive power, reduce reasoned thought, quell individualism and suppress the very freedom presidents claim they want to preserve.

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