Framing

J201 Introduction to Mass Communication
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① What are frames?
② Framing as perspective/foundation.
③ Frame building versus setting.
④ The power of frames.
“Central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning.”

(Gamson)
• We actively classify, organize, and interpret our experiences to make sense of them. The "schemata of interpretation," which are labeled "frames," enable individuals "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" (Goffman).

• Frames enable processing of large amounts of information quickly and routinely package the information for efficient story telling. Persistent selection, emphasis, and exclusion (Gitlin).
• Placing information in a unique context so that certain elements of the issue get a greater allocation of an individual's cognition.

• As a consequence of this, the selected elements become important in influencing individuals' judgments or inference making.
• “The basic frameworks of understanding available in our society for making sense out of events.” (Goffman)

• Schemata of interpretation that can be applied to a particular event. In doing so the event is made meaningful. Streams of sensory input are organized according to a preexisting organization into “something.”
One that defines what is happening “here.”
In doing so:

- It provide boundaries to the problem.
- Signals the cause of the problem.
- Suggest how to solve the problem.
- Implies who should solve it.
- Generates a sense of us & them.
We all build frames, but we are constrained by:

- Societal norms, values & culture.
- Pressure of prevailing frames (typically produced by elites, including journalist).
- Our ideology.
Examines the effects on audiences of frames.

- Influence can be cognitive or affective.
- Differences in audience members affect power of framed information.
Problem 1 \([N = 152]\): Imagine that the U.S. is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimate of the consequences of the programs are as follows:

If Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved.

If Program B is adopted, there is \(1/3\) probability that 600 people will be saved, and \(2/3\) probability that no people will be saved.

Which of the two programs would you favor?
Your poll will show here

1. Install the app from pollev.com/app
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The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice

Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman

Problem 1 \( N = 152 \): Imagine that the U.S. is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimate of the consequences of the programs are as follows:

If Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved.

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Which of the two programs would you favor?

If Program C is adopted 400 people will die.

If Program D is adopted there is \( \frac{1}{3} \) probability that nobody will die, and \( \frac{2}{3} \) probability that 600 people will die.

Which of the two programs would you favor?
The power of frames.

Problem 8 \([N = 183]\): Imagine that you have decided to see a play where admission is $10 per ticket. As you enter the theater you discover that you have lost a $10 bill. Would you still pay $10 for a ticket for the play?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Problem 9 \([N = 200]\): Imagine that you have decided to see a play and paid the admission price of $10 per ticket. As you enter the theater you discover that you have lost the ticket. The seat was not marked and the ticket cannot be recovered. Would you pay $10 for another ticket?

Yes [ ] No [ ]
Framing of news (Entman)
• Characteristics of media coverage
• Episodic vs Thematic framing
• Attributions of responsibility and “treatment”
Fig. 4.1  Episodic and Thematic Coverage of Crime and Terrorism, 1981–86
Framing of news (Iyengar)
Framing public service announcements

1. WARNING: Smoking can kill you.
2. WARNING: Cigarettes cause cancer.
3. WARNING: Cigarettes cause fatal lung disease.

1-800-QUIT-NOW

BRAND 20 Class A Cigarettes
WARNING: Quitting smoking now greatly reduces serious risks to your health.

1-800-QUIT-NOW

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Framing main points

① Frames highlight certain information, that then becomes central in our understanding and decision making processes.

② Effective frames define a problem, suggest its cause, its solution and who is responsible to fix it.

③ Frames without counter frames, that resonate with prevailing frames are easier to adopt.

④ Framing goes well beyond telling us what to think about, to telling us what to think...
Have a good weekend!