

MPC MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER

U.S. Immigration and Media Bias surrounding the reporting of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) immigration policies

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## **ABSTRACT**

In 2012, President Barack Obama used his executive power to bypass Congress and unilaterally pass a controversial immigration policy called the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and two years later its successor, the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents immigration policy. This MRP explores whether a media slant is salient in the editorial reporting surrounding these policies from two major U.S. political networks-- The FOX News Channel (FOX) and the Cable News Network (CNN).

Previous academic research (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2007) has indicated that CNN's audience tends to be left-leaning favoring the Democratic Party, while right-leaning conservative Republicans tune into FOX for their political information (Gil de Zúñiga, Correa and Valenzuela, 2012). Keeping this in consideration, would the political networks tailor its digital editorial content to mimic its audiences' political preference?

Borrowing from Benson and Wood's (2015) media frames surrounding undocumented immigration, a framing analysis and a textual content analysis were employed on the digital editorial content published by FOX and CNN from July 2014 and February 2015. The findings revealed that both networks published messaging aligned with its audiences' political affiliation. The FOX News Channel emphasized how undocumented immigrants were a problem for society and authorities and published content which contained anti-Democrat rhetoric and was acutely critical of President Obama. Conversely, the framing analysis revealed the Cable News

Network was more likely to accentuate the problems for immigrants and defend President Obama and his unilateral exercises of constitutional powers.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The following Major Research Paper discusses how two different American political networks--The Cable News Network (CNN) and the FOX News Channel (FOX)-- report on President Barack Obama's executive orders on immigration reform, as discussed through editorials between the dates of July 2014 and February 2015. The immigration policies in question are the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) immigration program, and its offspring, the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) program.

In 2012, President Barack Obama used his executive power to pass the controversial immigration policy DACA, which grants temporary citizenship to eligible undocumented immigrants who arrived in the United States as children in the eyes of the legal system (i.e. before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday). This presidential decree would allow qualified individuals to work and attend school in the country temporarily. Subsequently, in 2014 President Obama once again used his executive authority to expand the initial provisions to also include the parents of illegal immigrant youth who currently lived in the U.S., resulting in the creation of DAPA. Both policies are widely disputed in the world of American politics and opinions are often defined by party lines: liberal Democrats are more likely to support immigration than conservative Republicans. For my major research paper (MRP), I will be exploring American politics and investigating whether a media slant may exist within two popular United States media outlets. Specifically, I will be analyzing editorials from FOX and CNN which discuss the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) immigration program, and its successor,

the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) program.

Through a textual content analysis, this MRP examines whether the political directions of FOX and CNN are reflected in the editorial reporting on the DACA and DAPA immigration policies. This question is of importance as it could reveal media slant in a system that rests on the crucial and fundamental trait of impartiality and objectivity, by demonstrating that writers could be presenting information aligned with the ideologies of their audience.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Topics explored in this research paper include American politics and immigration, media bias, and the contributing factors to and psychological influences on media bias. Framing theory is also investigated and employed through a qualitative content analysis of digital editorials.

### American Politics and Immigration

According to the United States Census Bureau, as of February 1, 2016, there were an estimated 322,918,520 people living in the U.S. (United States Census Bureau, 2015). A study by the Pew Research Center, an independent think-tank organization, indicates that as of 2014 there were 11.3 million illegal immigrants living in the United States (Krogstad & Passel, 2015). For clarification, pursuant to the definition upheld by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), a *foreign-born* is an umbrella term describing people who were not born within the United States. These would include, “naturalized U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents (immigrants), temporary migrants (such as foreign students), humanitarian migrants (such as refugees and asylees), and persons

illegally present in the United States” (United States Census Bureau, 2015). Given the size of the American population, and the diverse political ideologies that exist within the country, immigration is a heavily debated topic.

The contemporary American political system is comprised of two major political parties: the Republicans (conservatives) and the Democrats (liberals), which often represent competing ideologies that exist within the country. The political parties compete for majority control in the Senate and presidential representation in the White House during election periods. These political parties tend to hold conflicting ideas on how to manage pertinent issues facing the country- including healthcare, tax spending and immigration. Since the 2004 Presidential elections, immigration has become a prominent topic for debate and has received considerable coverage in the media (Brader, Valentino, & Suhay, 2008). Research surrounding party affiliation and attitudes towards immigrants indicates that those who identify with the Republican Party tend to have more negative sentiments toward foreign-born people of both the legal and illegal classification (Gil de Zúñiga, Correa & Valenzuela, 2012; Brader, Valentino & Suhay, 2008; Bierbrauer & Klinger, 2002).

In addition to party affiliation, statistical reporting may influence attitudes towards immigrants and immigration in the United States. Invested parties, such as government officials and interest groups, can use statistics to sway public opinion in their political favor in respect to the formation of public policy. However, as Correa-Cabrera and Rojas-Arenaza (2012) reveal, “The production of consistent information is often not the primary concern of political actors or groups with specific economic or political agendas” (p. 298). Consequently, their research discussed anti-immigrant groups

spreading statistical misinformation detailing supposed economic losses generated by non-documented immigrants in the United States. These figures are often referenced during immigration debates and garnered a substantial amount of media attention in the process. Adversely, the reporting of incorrect information from supposedly reliable sources (whether intentionally released to the public or not) can create a false reality, in this case that the presence of illegal immigrants had more detrimental effects on society than true. Research has shown that Americans have more anxiety about the publicized financial costs of immigration when the people in question are Latino rather than European immigrants (Brader, Valentino & Suhay, 2008). This is relevant as the United States immigration situation is not “ethnically neutral” (Gil de Zúñiga, Correa and Valenzuela, 2012). According to the Pew Research Center (2015), there were 5.6 million illegal Mexican immigrants living in the United States in 2014, representing 49% of the total unauthorized immigrant population (Krogstad & Passel, 2015).

Notably, the complex relationship between American politics and immigration is dynamic. Historically the Immigration Acts of 1965 and 1986 changed legislation to enable immigrants to migrate to the United States more freely. However a post 9/11 era has catalyzed modification to legislation to impede immigrants from entering the country (Andreas, 2003).

### Media Bias and Politics

Within journalism studies there is a lengthy history of conflicting views surrounding the media and the conception of a media bias. The notion of a media bias or slant has been debated in the academic disciplines of political science, journalism and communication research (Katz, 2001). The majority of scholarly research on media bias

tends to centre on its role in politics and policymaking (D'Alessio & Allen, 2000; Entman, 2007). A slant is said to have occurred if the media emphasizes certain frames or favorable information for one side of the debate, minimizing or ignoring the opponent's stance (Entman, 2010). In this regard, the reporter or politician is subconsciously telling the viewer what particular elements they should give more importance to in the debate. This practice is not new, however, as interest groups and political stakeholders have long attempted to influence mass public opinion on the ramifications of immigration to the United States (Passel & Fix, 1994).

Deliberation of the existence of a media bias is ongoing and, interestingly, researchers on both sides of the debate have generated favorable results for their respective arguments. While some believe that the media does at times demonstrate a bias in reporting (DellaVigna & Kaplan, 2006; Gil de Zúñiga, Correa and Valenzuela, 2012; Groseclose & Milyo, 2005), others have not found statistically significant biases to be present in their findings (D'Alessio & Allen, 2000).

Groseclose and Milyo (2005) formulated an objective measure of media bias and systematically determined that a sizable liberal slant was present amongst the vast majority of news stories from a sample of fifty American media outlets. Be that as it may, an outlier of their study was FOX News' Special Report, which demonstrated a considerable conservative bias.

Watts, Domke, Shah and Fan (1999) explored why industry professionals believe a liberal bias has permeated reporting in the last three decades. The allegations of a liberal bias are declared predominantly by Republican supporters (Watts et al., 1999), as

it is not uncommon for individuals to believe that the media is biased against one's own viewpoint (Eveland, 2003).

Researchers Page and Shapiro (1992) have identified numerous small biases in broadcasting which evolve from the media landscape of the United States itself, where these communication companies remain fundamental economic entities in a competitive marketplace. Although most of these small biases are insignificant in the scheme of things, that is not always the case. For instance, DellaVigna and Kaplan (2006) were able to statistically identify that in the election period between 1996 and 2000, FOX News succeeded in convincing three to eight percent of non-Republicans to vote for the Republican Party (p.32).

In 2000, a meta-analysis was performed by D'Alessio and Allen in which they analyzed 59 quantitative studies of online journalism dissertations. Searching for media bias in presidential elections, they found no statistically significant media bias in newspaper or magazine print. With that being said, their analysis did indicate--small but statistically significant--media biases when studying television network news in particular (p.149).

Gil de Zúñiga, Correa and Valenzuela (2012) advanced research in the field: through their survey analysis they found that although media outlets are supposed to be impartial in their reporting, although this does not always occur. Their research identified that individuals in support of Republican policies were more likely to receive their news from FOX, a network which infamously supports stringent immigration reform and often presents immigrants in a negative light. With such conflicting political ideologies and a plethora of options by which Americans can obtain news information,

media companies can tailor their coverage to reflect niche audiences with specific political beliefs (Stroud, 2007) and have an economic impetus to do so (Mullainathan & Schleifer, 2005). Reporting biases may also be attributable to the political affiliation of the media outlet itself. While conducting a cross-cultural analysis of objectivity and television broadcasting, Aday, Livingston and Hebert (2005) found that FOX News ignored the fundamental journalistic principle of objectivity when reporting on the Iraq War. As Groseclose and Milyo (2012) explain, research into media bias is important as journalists and media companies ordinarily do not explicitly announce their reporting is not objective.

#### Contributing Factors to and Psychological Influences on Media Bias

Technology such as the production of the industrial printing press and television drastically changed how we receive information, and the proliferation of mass communication has yet to halt. Once electronic media became commonplace in Westernized societies, social scientists began pondering the effects of mass communication on their audiences. Harris and Sanborn (2014) suggest that media effects arise from an accumulation of systematic exposure and are not attributed to a single instance. These cumulative effects may alter the ideological assumptions guiding an individual's opinion.

One theory that often accompanies the study of media effects and its extended exposure is cultivation theory. Cultivation theory examines the role of television in creating, sustaining and reproducing sociocultural ideologies. Its core premise emphasizes that across news programming and other segments of mass communication, there is a systematic--albeit subtle-- pattern of stories, messages and semantic

representations to describe certain groups of people and topics (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1986). Continued exposure to these dominating stories overtime can unconsciously shape the audience's perception of the content, since much of our experience is manifested vicariously through learned behavior (Gerbner et al, 1986). Therefore, if content is consistently skewed, through repeated exposure the viewer might cultivate an inaccurate belief or prejudice against another group in which they have had little personal experience. Although cultivation theory was originally created to coincide with the dissemination of the television, its theoretical foundation can be applied to new media which prevails in contemporary society.

Interestingly, people can inadvertently mold their own perceptions and opinions through the process of selective exposure. Kull and colleagues' (2003-4) research regarding selective exposure and political news generated some captivating results. During the height of the Iraq war in 2003, Americans were glued to their televisions, absorbing their preferred political networks to learn the latest on the war. It was identified that depending on the source of information, viewers held vastly different interpretations of current events. For instance, individuals who watched FOX News were likely to believe that Iraq held weapons of mass destruction and that there was a partnership between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda. Interestingly, viewers of PBS were less likely to believe these statements. Kull and colleagues' discovery is troublesome as it indicates that public opinion could be shaped through repeated selective exposure, consequently impacting how the audience views the world around them.

Another behavioral attribute that may influence how someone interacts with the media is the tendency for individuals to seek out information that reinforces their existing

ideologies in order to avoid cognitive dissonance (Frey, 1982). For instance, research has shown that individuals will tune into media outlets that mirror their pre-existing beliefs (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2008), such as Republicans tuning into the conservative political network that is FOX news.

Moreover, information reported by the media and other elite figures is often taken as an accurate representation of reality (Brader, Valentino & Suhay, 2008; van Dijk, 1989) therefore misinformation is troublesome. Academic literature has shown that the public views information from elite characters to be more valid or hold more credibility (Brader, Valentino & Suhay, 2008). An example of an elite figure would be a politician or other member of government, journalists/ reporters, celebrities or other affluent individuals. Historically, they were characterized as 'elite' because their success or wealth granted them access and influence to the distribution of mass communication (such as newspapers or roles of political significance) whereas laymen individuals had no such opportunity.

Prior communication and journalism research have demonstrated the effects that media influence has upon ideological assumptions and prejudices (Bauder, 2008; Zúñiga, Correa & Valenzuela, 2012). The way immigrants are portrayed in the media and the accompanying discourse around immigration policy and reform can affect audiences' attitudes towards foreign-born individuals (Bauder 2008; Van Dijk 1989; Boomgardden & Vliegthart 2007). Media outlets harness the ability to successfully influence the attitudes of their audience, which can subsequently impact public opinion. Of concern, media discourse around immigration tends to embody negative connotations, often depicting immigrants as dangerous, criminals, perpetrators, and lacking a desirable work

ethic (Bartolucci, 2012; Dixon, 2008; Mulvey, 2010; Snow, Vliegenthart & Corrigan-Brown, 2007; van Dijk, 1989).

### Framing Theory

The conception of framing became prevalent in social sciences in the 1980s after Erving Goffman penned *Framing Analysis* (1974) while expanding on the original work of Gregory Bateson. Framing is prevalent in political communication, policy issues and in the explanation of social movements (Entman, 1993; Gamson, 1992; Grimm & Andsager, 2011; Snow, Vliegenthart & Corrigan-Brown, 2007). According to Entman (1993), to frame is to “select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p.52). The concept of framing envelops the conceptual public discourse surrounding an issue (Kosicki, 2001). According to de Vresse (2005), “Frames are parts of political arguments, journalistic norms, and social world” (p.53).

Framing is a powerful tool as it has the capacity to emphasize certain aspects of reality and omits others (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Kahneman and Tversky, 1984). Political players use framing strategically in order to gain support for their particular stance or viewpoint. A ‘framing effect’ is said to have occurred if a frame in the communication text persuades an individual to amend their attitude toward the issue at hand (Chong and Druckman, 2007; Entman, 1993).

Scholars of framing analysis continue to debate the mechanisms that affect framing and the probability of influencing one’s cognition. One such mechanism is the availability of cognitive information we can retrieve (Price and Tewksbury, 1997). It is

common for an individual to hold competing ideas on a subject, and as a result their attitude towards the issue will depend on what information is readily accessible at a given time. Keeping this in mind, politicians attempt to capitalize on this notion of ‘attitude accessibility’ (Scheufele, 2000, p. 300). According to Scheufele (2000), “Political issues that are the most salient or accessible in a person’s memory will most strongly influence perceptions of political actors and figures” (p. 300).

To illustrate, imagine that a proponent for a new local pulp mill wanted to work with a rural community to undertake deforestation of the area. A proponent for the pulp mill would highlight the economic benefits of bringing a mill to the community, whereas an opponent may articulate the environmental repercussions of the operation. Thus, the frames of ‘economic prosperity’ and ‘environmental dismay’ were created in an attempt to entice community members to agree with their respective positions. Depending on what information the community member can mentally retrieve at a given moment—economic prosperity or environmental repercussions— their support will align with that frame’s ideology. Consequently, if a woman rejects the deforestation proposal after reading an article about the devastating effects for the environment and animals, then a ‘framing effect’ is said to have transpired.

An alternative perspective on framing rejects the assumption that humans are passive agents of information simply retrieving the most readily available knowledge, which our mental recall permits. In fact, we actively evaluate the information at hand, carefully considering the content itself and the source of the material. Chong and Druckman (2007) concede that a reader’s opinion depends on how he or she evaluates the

frames presented in the communication text, in conjunction with his or her predisposed beliefs with respect to the issue in question.

A pertinent piece of framing literature that is relevant to this research study comes from Benson and Woods (2015) investigation of popular media frames surrounding immigration. Rodney Benson and Tim Wood (2015) analyzed sources of quoted material, as well as how issues were framed in American news stories that focused on unauthorized immigration. The researchers synthesized literature on the reporting of undocumented immigration and identified a series of problem, cause and solution frames which are often present in the media relating to undocumented immigration. The results of their analysis indicated that more problem frames were presented in the United States media than cause and solution frames. Another interesting aspect of their findings concluded that invested groups in the immigration debate seldom responded to counterarguments posited by the opposing side.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Based upon my preliminary academic literature review that acknowledged the compelling relationship between the media, U.S politics and immigration, I have constructed the following inquiries:

**RQ1:** Are the political directions of the Cable News Network (CNN) and The FOX News Channel (FOX) reflected in their editorial reporting on the DACA and DAPA immigration policies, and President Obama's exercise of his executive powers on immigration reform?

**R2:** Which frames dominate the editorial media coverage that constitutes the data sample?

**R3:** What rhetorical devices are used to persuade readers to align their position with that of the author?

Since the literature has indicated that mass communication and the media can influence an audience's perception of an issue, an existing media bias or slant could perpetuate prejudices and stereotypes (which formulate a multitude of well-documented repercussions for society that are outside the scope of this research). Furthermore, biased reporting may paint an inaccurate representation of the world and those who live in it.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

I will be analyzing political media reporting of two media outlets (FOX and CNN) using their respective digital websites. For the collection of my data, I will be analyzing digital editorial archives of FOXnews.com and CNN.com. Editorials that will be investigated will be in reference to President Obama and his 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) immigration policy and its 2014 expansion, the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA).

To begin my data collection, I performed a keyword search of 'Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals' in the search inquiry of FOXnews.com and CNN.com. I also did a separate search of 'DACA' to ensure I generated all possible digital pieces associated with the immigration policies. I repeated this procedure for the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents and 'DAPA' separately, as well. These searches garnered 75 matches accumulatively between the two news media outlets. Of the 75 articles, 23 political opinion editorials (four from FOX and 19 from CNN) were found to be applicable, given the parameters of the research study. Applicable samples include the four political opinion editorials from FOX and the four political opinion

editorials from CNN closest in date to the corresponding FOX samples. This was done to ensure the editorials were written around similar time periods, encompassing specific political events.

All data samples were written between July 2014 and February 2015, when thousands of individuals were arriving at the United States and Mexican border without the proper documentation. As a result, immigration and the role DACA and DAPA played in the upsurge of unaccompanied and undocumented foreign youth arriving at the U.S. border were often discussed in the American media.

The media outlets FOX and CNN were strategically selected because their audiences identify with opposing political affiliations. Previous academic research (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2007) has indicated that CNN's audience tends to be left-leaning favoring the Democratic Party, while right-leaning conservative Republicans tune into FOX for their political information (Gil de Zúñiga, Correa and Valenzuela, 2012). This data collection method is suitable for my research questions as it enables me to gather editorials from media outlets whose audiences have an identifiable political lean. I would like to note that by selecting CNN to contrast FOX in my research, I am not implying that CNN is the most liberal media outlet in America, but rather indicating that its network has a Democratic lean which is acknowledged in the scholarship.

Forms of mass communication such as the media populously engage in public discourse surrounding political, economic, societal or cultural events (Baym, 2015) and one form of disseminating information is editorials. Editorials are opinion pieces that appear in newspapers or contemporary digital websites dedicated to network news. According to van Dijk (1995), there are limited in-depth scholarly studies on the

persuasive functions of editorials in discourse analysis. He also asserts that editorials tend to reflect the biases of the author since their knowledge stems from flawed socially and personally constructed mental models.

Van Dijk (1996) affirms that editorials are “the expression and persuasive communication of opinions” (p. 13). Interestingly, editorials do not necessarily reflect majority public opinion so much as the opinion of the institutionalized ‘elites’ (Citrin, Green, Muste & Wong, 1997; van Dijk, 1995). Political opinion editorials were chosen to be analyzed because this form of persuasive communication innately exists within the text. The author can intertwine their personal opinion on the matter— or the opinion of the media establishment—versus simply regurgitating the news. According to Bal (2014), opinion editorials must be analyzed on multiple levels: the discourse level (examining paragraphs as a whole) and as well the sentence level (where specific words, phrasing, and sentences are investigated). It is possible to infer whether the editorial’s orientation is positive or negative by considering the authors word choices (Bal, 2014). Of significance, a textual analysis of the editorial headline and content was performed where I attempted to identify rhetorical devices that supplemented the frames relating to undocumented immigration. The editorial highlights section and any accompanied video or photos were omitted from examination.

## **METHOD OF ANALYSIS**

When considering my form of theoretical analysis, I will undertake a qualitative, textual content analysis. As reported by van Dijk (1989), there is not one prevalent framing theory or approach to framing analysis, thus I will be modeling part of my

research from Benson and Wood's (2015) commonly used frames by the media relating to undocumented immigration. With that being said, before beginning the inductive content analysis I scanned the data set for any apparent themes that may be present in the text but were not represented within Benson and Wood's (2015) research (which I will discuss momentarily). In conjunction with framing analysis, using this grounded theory approach enabled me to identify three categories of interest in relation to my research questions.

The first category that will be coded is the depiction of President Obama and his use of executive power to formulate immigration reform through DACA and DAPA. Text encompassing this theme will be coded as 'positive', 'negative' or 'neutral'. A positive depiction of the President is defined as 'mentions of President Obama and/or discussion surrounding DACA/DAPA is positive or supportive in nature.' Alternatively, a negative depiction is defined as 'President Obama is a catalyst or at fault for the immigration crisis; his actions are self or politically motivated and are not in the best interest of the country.' A neutrally coded statement would include 'Mentions of President Obama are neutral and/or discussion about DACA/DAPA is neutral or procedural in nature.' I will be following Bal's (2014) semantic interpretation of "positive, negative, and neutral" to determine the persuasive orientation of the editorial text. According to Bal (2014), "There can be one or multiple opinion terms of different polarity or orientation in a statement but the statement has to be tagged taking into consideration the overall effect in terms of opinion orientation. If the statement does not bear any particular opinion orientation, i.e., either 'Positive' or 'Negative', it is tagged as 'Neutral'" (p.3).

The second theme drawn from my observations is the use of anti-opposition language. The sub-categories within this theme that will be coded are 1) Anti-opposition-Democratic and 2) Anti-opposition-Republican. Negative sentiment of the political party characterizes this category. Moreover, an additional category of significance that will be coded is the use of loaded language. For the purposes of my research, loaded language refers to the systematic use of rhetorical structures that facilitate the transfer of knowledge between groups. According to van Dijk (1995) these semantic representations present themselves textually through the lexicon selection, the categorization of groups, the use of metaphors, figurative language and character attacks, to name a few. These forms of loaded language will be identified for further examination.

A pertinent aspect of my framing analysis will be applying Benson and Wood's (2015) 'Problem, Cause, and Solution frames related to undocumented immigration' (p.807; see figure 1). The four sub-categories within 'Problem frames' that will be coded include: 1) Problem for authorities; 2) Problem for society; 3) Problem for immigrants; and 4) No problem. There are also four sub-categories for 'Cause frames' that will be coded: 1) Cause pull factors; 2) Cause push factors; 3) Cause-system (pro-immigration) and 4) Cause-system (anti-immigration). Likewise, the four sub-categories present within the 'Solution frames' to be coded include: 1) Solution enforcement; 2) Solution external; 3) Solution reform system; and 4) Solution campaign. Reference Figure 1 for descriptions of each frame and sub-category that will be coded in this study.

In addition to the immigration frames identified by Benson and Wood (2015), I will be coding for two supplementary frames, which are: 1) call to action; and 2) discussion of the constitutionality of DACA or DAPA.

It is important to note that a sentence may be coded for multiple frames if its content falls within different categories. To illustrate, consider the following excerpt from FOX editorial 2, paragraph 6: *“President Obama’s immigration strategy is all about politics and getting credit rather than about families and people.”* This sentence would be coded as “Problem POTUS”, as the author believes his unilateral action on immigration is self-serving. Moreover, the author is implying that the ramifications of the President’s actions are detrimental to families and people, and consequently, the sentence also contains a “Problem for Society” frame.

The media outlets in question have audiences identifying with different political parties. This method of analysis is appropriate as it enables me to study the framing and use of language to describe the same issue. Differences in reporting (indicated by differences in the coding of frames and the representation of the President and his policies. As well as the use of loaded language actualized through rhetorical devices) will allow me to potentially unveil a media slant innate to the narrating itself. Given the different audiences, biases in reporting may indicate the media is tailoring its message to its audience.

## **FINDINGS**

The findings of the study were divided into three sections: Part 1a discusses Benson and Wood’s (2015) Problem, Cause and Solution frames used by the media relating to undocumented immigration. The four subcategories of each respective classification (problem, cause and solution) are reviewed below.

Part 1b continues the framing analysis component of the study and discusses the additional coded frames within the data sample that are independent of Benson and Wood's (2015) frames. Seven categories were coded including 'Problem POTUS'; 'Call to action'; 'Anti-opposition-Democrat'; 'Anti-Opposition-Republican' and 'Depictions of President Obama and DACA/DAPA', which were labeled as 'positive, negative or neutral'.

Part 2 of the findings section examines the rhetorical devices that are employed within each media outlet's discourse. Congruent with van Dijk's (1995) analysis of rhetorical techniques, multiple rhetorical devices were inductively identified within the editorials. These would include accusatory language, lexical choices and how they reveal power relations between groups, repetition, hyperboles, figurative language (metaphors), oversimplification, lexical choices and character attacks. Furthermore, the ideological manifestation of "Us" versus "Them" will be discussed.

**PART 1a:** Benson and Wood's (2015) Problem, Cause and Solution Frames used by the media related to undocumented immigration

**Problem Frames**

The four subcategories within this section include 'Problem for Authorities'; 'Problem for Society'; 'Problem for Immigrants'; and 'No Problem'. Frequencies and an example of its implementation for CNN and FOX are found below. Explanations for each 'Problem frame' are derived from Benson and Wood's (2015) previously identified definitions.

### Problem for Authorities

Congruent with Benson and Wood's (2015) definition, the 'Problem for Authorities' frame includes the following components: "Politicians are under attack for their stances on immigration; the immigration system produces unintended negative consequences; immigration is undermining diplomatic relations; undocumented immigration unfairly threatens the legal immigration system"

Both media outlets used the 'Problem for Authorities' frame nearly an equal number of times when reporting on undocumented immigrants-- with FOX presenting this frame 17 times, slightly more than the 16 times it was used by CNN. An example of this frame is found in FOX editorial 1, paragraph 3, when author Liz Peek wrote, *"There's no place to put them, no way to process all of them, and we have legal impediments to deporting them [...]"*. An illustration of this frame from a CNN editorial is found in editorial 1, paragraph 8. Tim Kane wrote, *"This isn't illegal immigration as normally constituted. Its chaos immigration."*

### Problem for Society

For the purpose of this study, the definition of the 'Problem for Society' frame states: "Too many immigrants will enter the country under DACA; the immigration policy threatens safety, security, or culture of U.S.; undocumented youth strains social services."

FOX framed undocumented immigration and the immigration policies DACA and DAPA as a 'Problem for society' 20 times throughout the editorials, more than doubling CNN (who used it nine times). An example of this frame from FOX is derived from editorial 4, paragraph 3: "[...] the president's immigration actions impose considerable

direct costs on the states (*the cost of additional drivers' licenses alone run into the millions*)." When considering CNN, an exemplar of this frame is found in editorial 1, paragraph 1: "*Watching the flood of immigrant children from Central America seeking, and gaining, entry into the United States, one is struck by the chaos at all levels.*"

### Problem for Immigrants

The 'Problem for Immigrants' frame outlines how "Immigrants face potential violence, racism, human rights violations, or inhumane treatment while attempting to enter the U.S.; immigrants are likely to be exploited, or encounter unsafe work conditions."

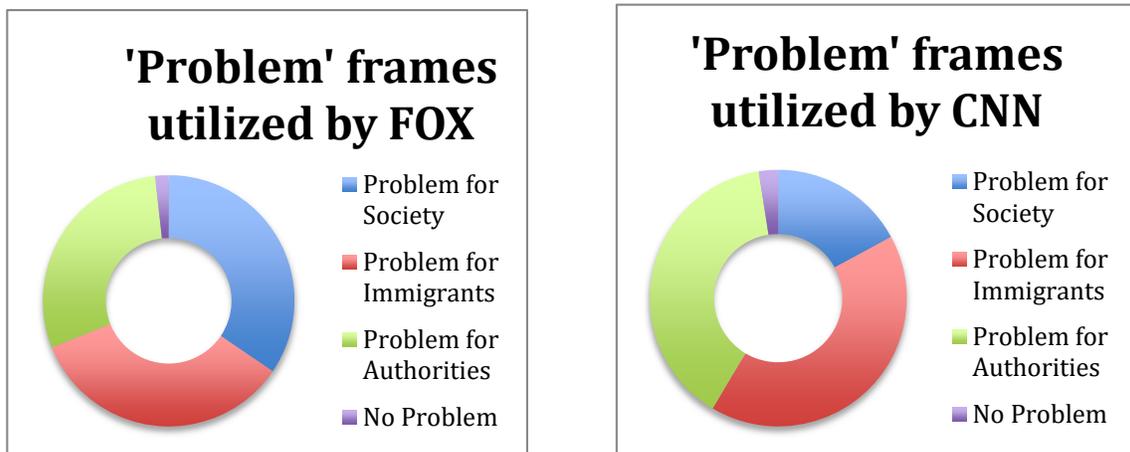
Both media outlets used the "Problem for Immigrants" frame an equal amount, appearing 20 times respectively. The following coding example of this frame is from FOX editorial 2, paragraph 8, when self-identified Republican Mark Meadows wrote, "*These children risked exploitation, kidnapping, abuse at the hands of coyotes, and even their lives to make the dangerous trek hundreds of miles through the dessert terrain.*" In comparison, CNN contributor Ruben Navarrette penned, "*There are a lot of strings attached, and there is no guarantee that some of these people won't be deported. It's a crap shoot for undocumented immigrants, [...]*". This illustration of the "Problem for Immigrants" frame is found in editorial 3, paragraph 4.

### No Problem

Factors which comprise the 'No Problem' frame include: "Immigration (including unauthorized immigration) contributes to society and does not represent a problem- for example, immigrants are good workers and do work others do not want to do; immigrants contribute to local economies; immigrants contribute to cultural diversity; and so on."

The ‘No Problem’ frame was the least used frame, occurring only once in both FOX and CNN editorials. Tim Kane, CNN contributor noted in editorial 1, paragraph 4, “*I, like most economists, believe immigration is a big win for the U.S. economy. I believe arguments about immigrants stealing jobs and eroding the culture are hogwash.*” The remaining example of this frame comes from Jay Sekulow, author of FOX editorial 4. In paragraph 17 he acknowledged the benefits of immigration: “*I’m not only aware of the immense contributions of immigrants to our nation, [...]*”.

Figure 1: ‘Problem’ frames employed by FOX and CNN



### Cause Frames

The four subcategories within this section include ‘Cause pull factor’; ‘Cause push factor’; ‘Cause system (Anti-immigration)’; and ‘Cause system (Pro-immigration)’. Frequencies and examples of its implementation for CNN and FOX are found below. Explanations for each ‘Cause frame’ are derived from Benson and Wood’s (2015) previously constructed definitions.

### Cause Pull Factor

This particular frame is defined as “Immigrant youth come to U.S. to take advantage of educational or economic benefits; deferred deportation motivates immigrant youth to enter U.S.”

‘Cause Pull Factor’ was the most common ‘Cause frame’ employed by both networks. With that being said, FOX utilized this frame three times as much as CNN (16:11). FOX editorial 2, paragraph 9 exemplifies this frame: *“The president’s latest amnesty move signals to millions in Central and South America that U.S. laws don’t hold any real weight anymore, and if they illegally enter the U.S., they’ll likely be able to stay.”*

A CNN example of a ‘Cause pull factor’ is found in editorial 2, paragraph 7 when Nararrette wrote, *“Obama might, as early as this week, take unilateral action to offer several million illegal immigrants a temporary reprieve from deportation and perhaps even give some of them work permits.”*

### Cause Push Factor

‘Cause Push factors’ are extraneous factors that may influence an immigrant to migrate, such as “Economic crisis, violence, or political persecution [that] drive emigration”.

The FOX Channel’s use of the ‘Cause push factor’ frame outnumbered CNN 3 to 1. In editorial 1, paragraph 6, author Liz Peek implemented this frame when referring to Central American countries El Salvador and Honduras: *“Since the mid-1990s those two*

*countries have ranked in the top ten most violent countries in the world.*” (Underline in original).

When considering CNN, a ‘Cause Push Factor’ frame was presented to readers in editorial 1, paragraph 7, “*Do you blame the poorest families throughout Central America for sending their children to the Texas border? I don’t.*”

#### Cause System (Pro-Immigration)

To be successfully coded as a ‘Cause System (Pro-Immigration)’ frame, the frame must express how “The immigration system is unnecessarily restrictive, bureaucratic, or time-consuming; [the] government is too strict or brutal in enforcing immigration”.

Cause system (Pro-immigration) frames are present twice within the FOX editorials and only once in the CNN data samples. In editorial 3, paragraph 5, FOX contributor Liz Peek wrote, “*These people [foreign interpreters and aids to American troops] are trapped in the immigration queue, and are paying for our creaky processes with their lives.*” Alternatively, CNN contributor Ana Navarro penned, “*For decades, Congress has been talking about fixing the broken immigration system*” in editorial 4, paragraph 5.

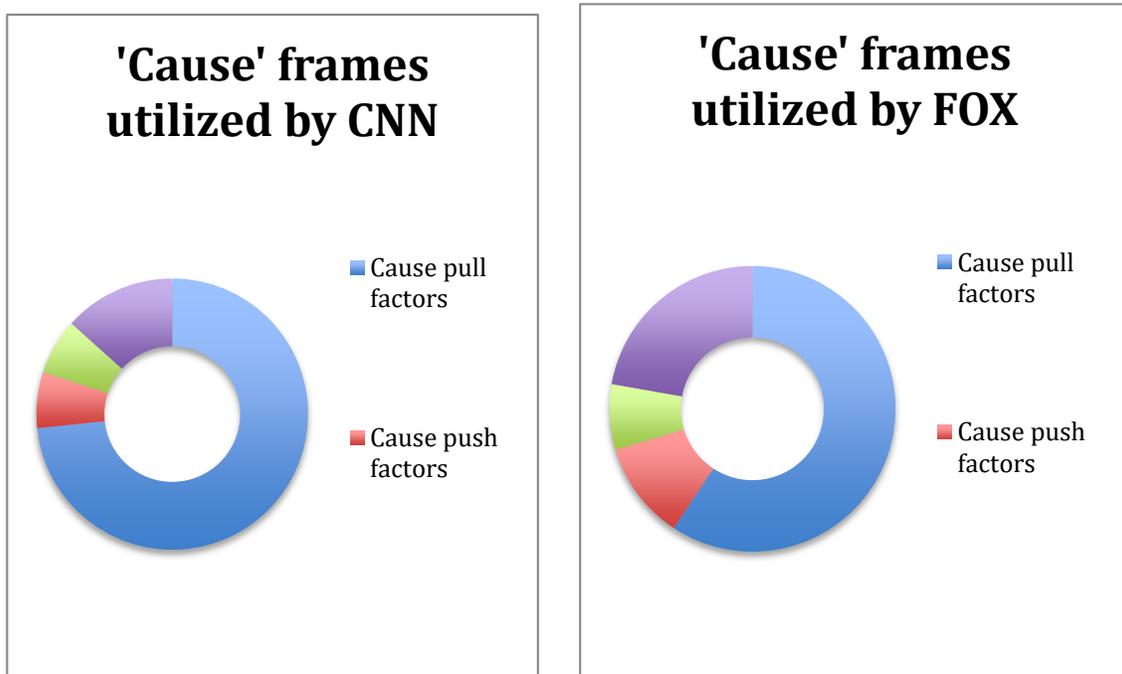
#### Cause System (Anti-Immigration)

According to Benson and Wood (2015) framing analysis, a ‘Cause System (Anti-Immigration) frame is defined as, “Lack of resources led to weak border control; current regional/international regulations are inadequate to manage immigration.”

Frames consisting of “Cause System (Anti-Immigration)” characteristics were three times more likely to appear in the FOX editorials than pieces from CNN (6:2). An example of this frame for FOX reads, “*It is clear to most that our immigration system is*

*dysfunctional and often works against our national interest*” and was found in editorial 3, paragraph 20. A coding example of this frame for CNN is found in editorial 1, paragraph 11: *“The 2008 law that requires the quasi-asylum is the crux of the problem, [...]”*.

Figure 2: ‘Cause’ frames employed by CNN and FOX



### Solution Frames

The four subcategories within this section are ‘Solution Enforcement’; ‘Solution External’; ‘Solution Reform System’; and ‘Solution Campaign’. The definitions of these frames are parallel with that of Benson and Wood’s (2015) study.

#### Solution Enforcement

In order for the editorial text to qualify as a “Solution Enforcement” frame, it must emphasize “Enhanced punishment for violations of immigration law, or for hiring, housing, or abetting undocumented immigrants; more resources to strengthen border

control and enforcement; more police to combat immigration-related crime; deny immigrants opportunities for work, health care, education, or services so they will self-deport.”

The “Solution Enforcement” frame was implemented three times accumulatively in the FOX editorials, which is slightly less than CNN (who utilized it four times). An example from the text for the FOX News Channel was found in editorial 1, paragraph 17b, which reads: *“Like it or not (and it’s not how I would like to see my tax dollars spent), we do need more judges to handle the overflow of cases and more money will need to be spent on border security.”* An illustration of this frame for CNN is apparent in editorial 1, paragraph 12a, when Tim Kane wrote, *“The common sense policy fix is for Congress to allow border control agents to treat unaccompanied children from nonborder states the same way children from Mexico are treated and simply deny entry.”*

#### Solution External

Although there were no instances of this frame for either political network, ‘Solution External’ frames would have mentioned how “Foreign investment and development aid will ease immigration problems; strengthened diplomatic ties will help states resolve their conflicting needs; solving political and military conflicts in other nations will address immigration problems.”

#### Solution Reform System

An explanation for the ‘Solution Reform System’ frame includes text which indicates “The immigration system should be made less complicated and time consuming, more temporary and permanent immigration should be allowed; conditional

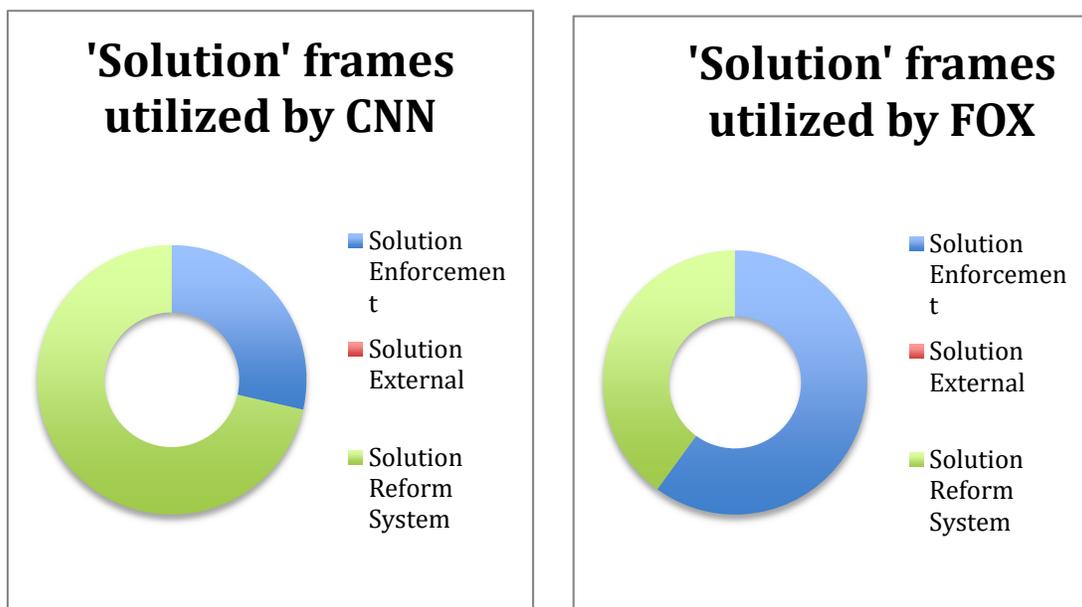
resident status should be granted to children brought illegally into the country, or to those whose safety will be threatened if they are returned to their country of origin.”

With regards to the ‘Solution Reform System’ coding, CNN used this frame 10 times. An illustration of a “Solution Reform System” frame from this media outlet can be found in editorial 3, paragraph 1: “*America’s immigration issue needs a comprehensive and permanent bipartisan legislative solution.*” The FOX News Channel employed this frame significantly less. One of the two times it arose was in the following statement: “*I’m also aware of the need for immigration reform*” which was found in editorial 4, paragraph 17.

### Solution Campaign

“Attitude/information campaigns aimed at undocumented immigrants, the public, or authorities will help address immigration problems” comprises the ‘Solution Campaign’ frame. However, this particular frame was absent from both media outlet’s editorials.

Figure 3: ‘Solution’ frames employed by CNN and FOX



## **PART 1b:** Additional coded frames

The preliminary observations of the data sample revealed that additional frames were present within the editorials and should be coded as well. Through this inductive process, the following categories were identified to be coded: ‘Problem POTUS’; ‘Call to action’; ‘Discussing the constitutionality of DACA/DAPA’; ‘Anti-Opposition-Democrat’; ‘Anti-Opposition-Republican’ and ‘Depiction of the President and/or DACA and DAPA’ which would be marked as ‘negative, positive, or neutral’.

### Problem POTUS

In addition to Benson and Wood’s (2015) identified ‘problem’ frames relating to undocumented immigration, the frame ‘Problem POTUS’ was coded. In order to fall into this category, the text would indicate that, “The influx of undocumented immigrant youth arriving at U.S. and Mexico border is a result of President Obama implementing DACA and DAPA. His actions have harmed the immigration situation in the United States.”

CNN utilized this frame 20 times accumulatively throughout the editorials, with an example stemming from editorial 2, paragraph 2: “*President Barack Obama has failed on immigration policy.*” In comparison to Benson and Woods (2015) problem frames, ‘Problem POTUS’ was found 43 times within the four FOX editorials, making it the most employed problem frame for the network overall. Editorial 4, paragraph 4, illustrates: “*Make no mistake, President Obama is to blame for the immigration fiasco. [...] it is clear that the trigger for the sudden influx [of undocumented immigrants] was President Obama’s campaign-motivated Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA), aka the “Dream Act”.*”

## Call to Action

A ‘Call to Action’ frame is defined “President Obama and/or Congress need to take action regarding immigration reform, to facilitate a long-term solution.”

CNN presented five ‘Call to Action’ frames accumulatively in the data sample. An illustration of the coding is seen in editorial 4, paragraph 4, “*Halt the implementation of the immigration program. Halt the legal maneuvering. Halt the irresponsible posturing on funding DHS [Department of Homeland Security]. Set a deadline to pass legislation.*”

In editorial 1, paragraph 1, FOX contributing author Liz Peek stated the following plea: “*Give him the money! Republicans in Congress need to stifle their hostility towards President Obama, and approve his emergency request for funds to alleviate our border disaster.*”

## Discussing the constitutionality of Obama’s executive orders DACA and DAPA

An inductively identified frame within the data set discusses the constitutionality of Obama’s executive actions and the legitimacy of his presidential power. Therefore, this frame is defined as “President Obama acted outside his presidential rights when he used his executive order to implement DACA and its successor DAPA, and/or the editorial discourse is procedural in nature.”

Frames discussing the constitutionality or legal procedures of Obama’s executive orders were prevalent through both political networks. CNN utilized this frame 18 times with an example found in editorial 3, paragraph 12 when Ruben Navarrette writes, “*Meanwhile, law professors and other legal experts have come forward to say that*

*Obama did not, in fact, change the law and that he has the Constitution on his side when it comes to using executive power.”*

Jay Sekulow, a FOX News Channel contributor, provides an example of coding for this frame. In editorial 4, paragraph 7, he writes, *“The court’s meaning is clear: The president’s action directly contradicts his legal duty”* (Italics in original). Within the data set, this frame was employed 11 times in total.

#### Anti-Opposition-Republican

In order for a frame to be classified as “Anti-Opposition-Republican”, the text must demonstrate a “Negative sentiment or depiction of the Republican Party.” The usage of this frame occurred twice by FOX and an example is found in the editorial 1, paragraph 18, when author Liz Peek writes, *“Politically, the GOP will lose by being obstructionist.”*

Accumulatively, editorial contributors for CNN used the “Anti-opposition-Republican” frame 14 times. An illustration is found in editorial three, paragraph 19: *“Besides, Republicans like to talk tough about illegal immigration and the need to uphold the “rule of law” but that slogan would mean more coming from them if they didn’t always run away from enforcing those laws that target the root of illegal immigration: U.S. employers who hire the undocumented, many of whom contribute to the re-election campaigns of Republican lawmakers.”*

#### Anti-Opposition-Democrat

An ‘Anti-Opposition-Democrat’ frame illustrates “Negative sentiment or depiction of the Democratic Party.” With that being said, the FOX News Channel employed “Anti-Opposition-Democrat” frames 17 times throughout the four FOX

editorials. An example of this coding is found in editorial 3, paragraph 7: *“Mr. Obama is not responding to an emergency in the Hispanic community. He’s responding to an emergency at the voting booth- for Democrats.”*

The Cable News Network only used the “Anti-Opposition-Democrat” frame once. Located in editorial 1, paragraph 6, it states, *“The cause of the chaos is not violence in those countries, but in coherence in Washington.”*

#### Depiction of President and DACA/DAPA: Negative

For text to be classified as a negative depiction of the President and/or DACA/DAPA it must indicate that “President Obama is a catalyst or at fault for the immigration crisis; his actions are self or politically motivated and not in the best interest of the country.”

Fifty-seven times throughout the data sample a FOX contributor portrayed the President or his executive orders negatively. An example of this coding is represented in the following statement: *“[...] it is clear that the trigger for the sudden influx was President Obama’s campaign motivated Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA), aka the “Dream Act”.* This illustration is found in editorial 1, paragraph 4c.

CNN presented a negative depiction of the President and/or his policies 32 times throughout the editorials. In editorial 2, paragraph 6, Ruben Nararrette wrote, *“Finally, this is not what Obama promised way back when – that he would work aggressively with Congress to pass legislation that would permanently improve the lives of millions. This isn’t reform. It’s “reform lite.”*

### Depiction of President and DACA/DAPA: Positive

“Mentions of President Obama and/or discussion surrounding DACA/DAPA is positive or supportive in nature” defines this frame. The only positive depiction of the President and/or his immigration policies was found contextually in the following statement: *“Republicans should not stand in the way of President Obama’s plan to solve this border crisis.”* This sentence was found in editorial 1, paragraph 17a.

CNN, on the other hand, employed this frame fourteen times. An example of coding from editorial 2, paragraph 20, is seen in the succeeding statement: *“It’s just a legitimate exercise of the power that any president would have under the Constitution and our system of government”* (Underline in original).

### Depiction of President and/or DACA/DAPA: Neutral

A frame with a neutral depiction of the President and/or DACA/DAPA would entail, “Mentions of President Obama are neutral and/or discussion about DACA/DAPA is neutral or procedural in nature.”

Neutral representations of the immigration policies in question and/or the President were presented 18 times on behalf of the FOX News Channel. An exemplification is found in editorial 4, paragraph 18: *“The president is already vowing to appeal, and it’s likely that the final word will once again rest with the Supreme Court of the United States.”* For CNN an example of coding for this category is found in editorial 3, paragraph 6. The statement reads: *“[...] so that, for instance, the undocumented parents of U.S.-born citizens get a temporary “deferred” status and thus can’t be removed for three years.”* Contributing editors for this network utilized this frame twenty-three times through the data samples.

## DISCUSSION

### In reference of RQ1:

*Are the political directions of the Cable News Network (CNN) and The FOX News Channel (FOX) reflected in their editorial reporting on the DACA and DAPA immigration policies, and President Obama’s exercise of his executive powers on immigration reform?*

As previously mentioned throughout the paper, academic research (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2007) has indicated that CNN’s audience tends to be left-leaning favoring the Democratic Party, while right-leaning conservative Republicans tune into FOX for their political information (Gil de Zúñiga, Correa and Valenzuela, 2012). An analysis of the research findings has found evidence supporting the conception that CNN and FOX may be tailoring their editorial content to appease their audience. Affirmation that FOX may project a conservative media slant is discussed below.

**Figure 4:** Results and Frequencies from Framing Analysis

	Most prevalent Benson and Wood’s (2015) frames related to undocumented immigration		Most prevalent frames Overall -- Benson & Wood (2015) frames + additionally coded frames	
CNN	Problem for immigrants	20	Depiction of President and/or DACA/DAPA— Negative	32
	Problem for authorities	16	Depiction of President and/or DACA/DAPA— Neutral	23
	Cause pull factors	11	Problem for immigrants	20

	Solution reform system	9	Discussing constitutionality of DACA/DAPA	18
	Problem for society	9	Problem POTUS	18
<b>FOX</b>	Problem for Society	20	Depiction of President and/or DACA/DAPA— Negative	58
	Problem for immigrants	19	Problem POTUS	42
	Problem for authorities	17	Problem for society	20
	Cause pull factor	16	Problem for immigrants	20
	Cause-system (Anti-immigration)	6	Anti-Opposition-Democrat	17
			Depiction of President and/or DACA/DAPA— Neutral	17
			Problem for authorities	17

The first piece of evidence that the FOX News Channel may have a pro-Republican slant is visible through the application of Benson and Wood's (2015) Problem, Cause, and Solution Frames commonly used in the media when discussing undocumented immigration. Overall, FOX contributors utilized problem frames stressing the negative ramifications of immigration, more than cause and solution frames combined (57 times compared to 27 and 5 instances, respectively). Research surrounding party affiliation and attitudes towards immigrants indicates that those who identify with the Republican Party tend to have more negative sentiments toward foreign-born people of

both the legal and illegal classification (Gil de Zúñiga, Correa & Valenzuela, 2012; Brader, Valentino & Suhay, 2008; Bierbrauer & Klinger, 2002).

When broken down by category (problem, cause or solution), the most prevalent frames employed by FOX were the following: ‘Problem for Society’; ‘Cause Pull Factors’; and ‘Solution Enforcement’, which were utilized 20, 16, and three times respectively. Survey information by the Pew Research Center indicates that Republicans are inclined more so than Democrats to assert that immigrants have a negative effect on society (Krogstad, 2015). Keeping this in mind, as ‘Problem for Society’ was the most utilized ‘problem’ frame employed by the network, this supports the notion that The FOX News Channel may project pro-Republican rhetoric for its audience.

The most employed ‘cause’ frame-- ‘Cause pull factors’-- also provided some interesting findings. Contributing editors consistently declared how President Obama’s immigration policies, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and its successor, the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Citizens (DAPA), were responsible for luring undocumented youth to the U.S. and Mexico border. Instead of expressing how immigrants are attracted to the economic or educational opportunities a country like America has to offer, FOX editors implied continuously that President Obama’s executive orders were the impetus for the influx of immigrants at the border. Furthermore, ‘Solution enforcement’ frames and other restrictionist proposals exhibit a Republican ideology (Ramakrishnan and Wong, 2007).

An additional piece of supporting evidence that FOX may have a conservative slant in reporting is that the editorial coverage of the DACA and DAPA immigration policies (as well as President Obama) was undeniably negative. For example, the frame

‘Depiction of President Obama and/or DACA and DAPA--Negative’ was employed 57 times by FOX contributors, making it the most used frame in the dataset irrespective of the media source. In fact, their usage nearly doubled that of the Cable Network News writers (57:32). With that being said, the second most prevalent frame overall was ‘Problem POTUS’, which FOX presented 43 times, double that of CNN (42:18). Aligning with findings from Abramowitz and Saunders (2006), this may be because in the last decade negative assessments of a President who represents an opposing political party has substantially increased.

Evidence from the coding that supports the notion that FOX and CNN may be presenting content aligned with their audience’s political affiliation is found when examining the ‘Anti-Opposition’ frames. The FOX News Channel presented the ‘Anti-Opposition-Democrat’ frame 17 times throughout the data samples, and the Anti-Opposition-Republican’ frame only twice. Likewise, CNN used the ‘Anti-Opposition-Republican’ frame 14 times, while ‘Anti-Opposition-Republican’ appeared just twice. This finding reinforces the concept that the media outlets in question may be presenting content that is parallel to its audience’s political preference. According to Stroud (2008) people seek out information that will not produce cognitive dissonance. Bearing in mind that academic literature has already indicated the political orientation of FOX and CNN’s audiences’, the networks would benefit by presenting a political stance that mimics the political predilection of its viewers.

An intriguing observation from the framing analysis emanates from the ‘Discussing the constitutionality of DACA/DAPA’ frame, as the underlying messaging of this frame for each network differed. In the majority of instances this frame was

presented by FOX, the nature of the frame stressed how the President was outside his constitutional rights when using executive power to circumvent congress and pass DACA and DAPA unilaterally. An example is found in FOX editorial 2, paragraph 1: “[...] *President Obama has announced his blatantly unconstitutional move to grant amnesty [...]*”, where as a more representative illustration for the Cable News Network is found in editorial 3, paragraph 12: “*Meanwhile, law professors and other legal experts have come forward to say that Obama did not, in fact, change the law and that he has the Constitution on his side when it comes to using executive power.*” The selective nature of FOX’s assertion shows that the objectiveness of its reporting is teetering. Furthermore, CNN’s journalistic approach of explaining the procedures underlying DACA and DAPA feeds into the integrity of its coverage.

My first research question is not fully addressed by indicating there may be a conservative bias in reporting for The FOX News Channel. Therefore, evidence that the Cable News Network may project a liberal lean in its editorials will now be discussed.

Preliminary evidence for a liberal lean begins with the application of Benson and Wood’s (2015) Problem, Cause and Solution frames related to undocumented immigration in the media. The most prevalent frame presented by CNN was ‘Problem for immigrants’. This is congruent with the ideation that CNN may have a liberal lean, as Democrats are more supportive of immigration (Krongstad, 2015).

The most frequently used ‘cause’ and ‘solution’ frames were ‘Cause pull factor’ appearing 11 times, and ‘Solution reform system’ which occurred 10 times. Although CNN also implied the increase of undocumented immigrants at the border was likely a byproduct of DACA and DAPA, its most used ‘solution’ frame reveals an interesting

element. Compared to The FOX News Channel (who implemented this frame only once), CNN had numerous frames which displayed support for immigration reform that would make it easier for undocumented immigrants to enter and/or remain within the United States.

The additional coded frame 'Depiction of the President' revealed more about the divisive content separating CNN and FOX. The networks presented a similar amount of 'neutral' frames surrounding the President and his immigration policies (CNN= 23/ FOX=18; although this could imply the Cable News Network has a slight edge when considering the objectivity in its reporting). However, the most interesting aspect of this segment of analysis entails the 'positive' and 'negative' representations. For instance, CNN implemented 'positive' frames 14 times within the data samples, compared to FOX's one. The disparity of amicable support is undeniable with this frame, albeit not surprising. CNN still expressed frustration with the President as its writers presented 32 frames showing Obama and his policies in a 'negative' light. Yet with that being said, the context of its use is important: at times a negative claim or statement was presented by CNN in order to refute the statement or set up an opposing rebuttal. Therefore, the frequencies may not be representative of the underlying meaning of the text. Notably, FOX presented nearly double the amount of 'negative' frames as CNN (57:32).

To iterate other ways a liberal lean is evident in the dataset, CNN employed a disproportionate number of Anti-Opposition-Republican frames than Anti-Opposition-Democrat (14:2) and the nature of its usage of the 'Discussing the constitutionality of DACA/DAPA' frame is supporting evidence of a liberal lean.

In reference to RQ 2:

*Which frames dominate the editorial media coverage that constitutes the data sample?*

Applying Benson and Wood's (2015) Problem, Cause and Solution frames commonly used by media when reporting on undocumented immigration to the data sample has yielded some interesting results. The scholars identified four prevalent 'problem frames' in the media when reporting on undocumented immigrants that were critical to the research project: 'Problem for society'; 'Problem for immigrants'; 'Problem for authorities' and 'No problem'.

'Problem frames' Analysis:

The most prevalent 'problem' frame for CNN was 'Problem for immigrants', which appeared 17 times accumulatively. Interestingly, there was almost an even distribution of this frame across the four editorials (editorial 1=5; editorial 2=5; editorial 3= 4; editorial 4= 6). This may indicate that there is a preferred institutionalized opinion on behalf of the network, or that the contributing authors hold similar beliefs regarding the ramifications of immigration reform. The second most prevalent 'problem frame' used by CNN was found to be 'Problem for authorities', which was employed 16 times. Collectively, these two frames account for 78.3% of the utilized problem frames. For CNN, the discourse comprising the 'Problem for authorities' frames were not mentions of potentially increased crime rates or national security. The remarks concentrated on the amount of clerical work and number of border control personal necessary to process the

thousands of children desperate to cross into the United States. Notably, ‘Problem for society’ frames constituted 19.6% of the total problem frames employed.

For The FOX News Channel, “Problem for society” was narrowly the most frequently used frame, being presented 20 times throughout the four editorials slighting “Problem for immigrants” by one. As reported by Krogstad (2015), Republicans tend to publically focus on the negative reverberations for society of supporting immigration, such as the economic burden on social programs and citizens, and fear of foreigners taking jobs from American citizens. The most compelling result of applying Benson and Wood’s (2015) media frames to the data sample was that ‘Problem for immigrants’ was the second most used frame for FOX, appearing 19 times. This finding is in direct opposition of what was anticipated; a conservative audience may not be as receptive to the realities of an immigrants struggle, therefore it is interesting that FOX would present so many frames outlining obstacles immigrants encounter, potentially alienating their audience.

‘Problem for authorities’ was implemented 17 times throughout the FOX editorials. FOX editors outlined similar arguments as CNN, in essence the overwhelming amount of legal paperwork and number of authoritative figures needed to be even remotely competent at managing the volume of young immigrants. However, a point of disparity between the networks’ use of this frame would be a FOX contributor’s argument that allowing undocumented immigrants to remain or enter the United States promotes a “dangerous environment of lawlessness” (Meadows, editorial 2) which would subsequently put lives at risk and promote more political or social disorder. This argument, although technically erroneous (as President Obama is legally within his

presidential constitutional power to make these specific legislative changes, and with precedence) contributes to the sensationalistic and emotional appeals that underlies an abundance of The FOX News Channel's reporting (Morris, 2015).

Interestingly, both media outlets only utilized the 'No problem' frame once in the data samples. Regardless of the specific network or author, individuals were clearly hesitant to say that there are no repercussions of allowing masses of undocumented and unaccompanied immigrant youth into America. This may reflect an American ideology--which has disseminated across political parties--that citizens may be gravitating towards a mentality of nativism. Correspondingly, FOX presented more 'problem' frames than CNN (57 to 46), which also reinforces the ideation that FOX's negativity and exclusive manner may be the result of an institutionalized conservative position held by the station.

#### 'Cause frames' Analysis:

Turning attention to the 'cause' portion of the analysis reveals what the news stations believe to be the root or mitigating influence of immigration woes in America. The data sample was coded for four reoccurring media frames as reported by Benson and Wood (2015), which were 'Cause pull factor'; 'Cause push factor'; 'Cause system (Anti-immigration)'; and 'Cause system (Pro-immigration)'.

Within this category, CNN disproportionately favored use of the "Cause pull factor" frame that occurred 11 times in the editorials. What this indicates to the reader is that the influx of undocumented immigrants at the U.S. and Mexico border is not a result of a problematic political structure or malfunction, but is a result of politician-made incentives for these children to come to the United States. The most vocalized 'Cause pull factor' is President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

immigration policy, which indicates that the authors are holding Obama's executive orders accountable for the increase of illegal migration. This is also supported by the minimal use of the 'Cause push factors' and 'Cause system (Pro-immigration)' frames which were each used once, and that the 'Cause system (Anti-immigration)' frame was used only twice.

Contributing editors for the FOX editorials also chose to emphasize the 'Cause pull factor' frame, which was identified 16 times throughout the editorials. Similarly, Obama's executive orders DACA and DAPA were established as the explanation for the "chaos" occurring at the U.S. and Mexico border. The FOX editors were dismissive of legitimate push factors (such as violence in Latin countries), becoming fixated on DACA and DAPA as the principle cause of an overwhelmed immigration system. Intriguingly, the second most prevalent frame used by the network was 'Cause system (Anti-immigration)' occurring six times in the data sample, tripling CNN's exposure of this precise frame. This aspect of the framing analysis also supports the conception that FOX may be tailoring its message to its audience, as Republicans have consistently called for more restrictive immigration policies.

Similar to the 'problem frames' portion of the analysis, FOX news presented more 'cause' frames than CNN by almost double (27:15). Although both networks emphasized what they believed to be the dominating pull factors for immigrants, FOX presented a third more of these frames than CNN (16:11), iterating and imposing blame on President Obama for the border crisis.

'Solution frames' Analysis:

This is the only category of Benson and Wood's (2015) frames relating to undocumented immigration where CNN utilized more frames than FOX within the editorial data samples. CNN presented almost triple the amount of solution frames (14:5). The most presented 'solution' frame by CNN was 'solution reform system' which appeared 10 times throughout the editorials, a finding which subsequently supports my research question. CNN's audience has an academically identified liberal lean, which coincides with more supportive measures of immigration reform than their conservative counterparts (Krogstad, 2015). This ideology seems to resonate with the CNN contributing editors as the frame was distributed almost evenly across the data samples (editorial 1=2; editorial 1=3; editorial 3=3; editorial 4=2). Thusly, presenting an abundance of 'solution reform system' frames which call for less restrictive protocols and conditional residency for immigrant youth endorses the notion that CNN may be presenting material to match the ideological beliefs of its audience.

Comparatively, The FOX News Channel's 'solution' frames were allocated between 'Solution enforcement' and 'Solution reform system', appearing three and two times respectively. Interestingly, the three 'Solution enforcement' frames had an even distribution of use, appearing once within the first three editorials. Comparatively, the two times 'Solution reform system' appeared was in the fourth editorial, indicating that editor Jay Sekulow may have a more progressive stance on immigration reform than the other FOX contributors.

An intriguing finding that refutes my expected results is the 'Solution enforcement' frame. Before the research began, I assumed that FOX would employ more 'Solution enforcement' frames than CNN and, surprisingly, this was not the case.

(Although it was still the most used ‘solution’ frame by FOX contributors, as it was employed one time each within the first three editorials). CNN on the other hand, utilized this frame four times with a disproportionate number stemming from the first CNN editorial (three instances). An additional point of interest is that neither network used the ‘Solution external’ nor ‘Solution campaign’ frames in the data sample. This indicates that neither CNN nor FOX believe these strategies are plausible methods of managing the immigration situation at the U.S. and Mexico border. Although it would be socially beneficial to hold information sessions and spark discussion regarding immigrant strife (‘Solution campaign’ scheme) or bolster economic and democratic ties (‘Solution external’ proposition) to address some of the root problems leading to immigration, ultimately they may only be supplementary tactics to addressing immigration problems.

When examining all of Benson and Wood’s (2015) frames as coded in the dataset, it is evident that FOX presented more ‘problem’ frames than ‘cause’ and ‘solution’ combined. In total 57 ‘problem’ frames were presented in the editorials; aggregate frequencies indicate that ‘problem’ frames outnumbered ‘cause’ frames by 2:1. This is representative of The FOX News Channel’s ideological tendency to use sensationalist writing to impact its readers, and narrow their decision-making processes. Alternatively, CNN presented a nearly equal number of ‘cause’ and ‘solution’ frames promoting a more rounded form of discourse.

In reference to RQ3:

*What rhetorical devices were used to persuade readers to align their position with that of the author?*

The textual analysis revealed numerous rhetorical structures that are employed by the editorial contributors from both media networks. The prevalent theme concerns a

sociocultural position that exploits the underlying assumptions between groups of people - the ideological representation of “Us” versus “Them”.

The ideology of “Us” versus “Them” is often discussed when investigating social and group relations; as the “in-group” or “Us” resists or attempts to polarize themselves from the “out-group” or “Them” (van Dijk, 1989; 1995). This conception is often considered in relation to political science and/or public policy. Rhetorical devices are used to attenuate the negative effects of the ‘in-group’ and emphasize the unfavorable elements of the “out-group”.

According to van Dijk (1992) the disparity between “Us” and “Them” is derived from “the political orientation of the newspaper” (p. 245). Through the textual analysis the following rhetorical techniques were identified to persuade the reader and highlight this dichotomy: accusatory language, power relations emblemized through lexicon choices, repetition, hyperboles, figurative language (metaphors), oversimplifications, lexical choices and character attacks among others.

### 1, Accusatory language

Accusatory language is visible throughout the data sample and is implemented by contributors of both media outlets. For instance, the language of the first FOX editorial, ““Memo to GOP: Let Obama own immigration mess on our border” written by Liz Peek illustrates this technique. Within the first three lines of the editorial, the author has declared that President Obama is to blame for the immigration dilemma: *“Give him the money! Republicans in Congress need to stifle their hostility towards President Obama, and approve his emergency request for funds to alleviate our border disaster. Only by*

*signing on for the \$3.7 billion “fix” will the GOP place this “urgent humanitarian crisis” squarely in Mr. Obama’s lap, where it belongs.”*

The author directly and indirectly places blame on President Obama for the current immigration climate in the United States. For example, in the opening excerpt above Peek indirectly places blame on Obama by claiming the crisis should be placed “*squarely in Mr. Obama’s lap, where it belongs*”. Implying the problem should reside in its proper place --with the President-- signifies that the dilemma is a direct result of his actions. Whether Obama’s unilateral actions actually catalyzed the influx of immigrants to the U.S. is unknown-- and seemingly irrelevant-- as the reader is led to believe that this is the case nonetheless (as indicated by Peek).

Another example of accusatory language within the FOX editorials comes in the form of explicit blame. The following statement illustrates: “*Make no mistake, President Obama is to blame for the immigration fiasco.*”/ “*Let him own the fruits of his labors.*” The author is indubitably indicating that the President’s approach to immigration reform caused the crisis at the U.S. and Mexico border.

Accusatory language was not limited to editorials from FOX contributors. CNN editors also attempted to indicate to their audience that the President contributed to the immigration problem currently enveloping the United States. In the second editorial, Ruben Naranette penned his frustration towards President Obama, accusing him of inadequately addressing the United States immigration situation: “*President Obama has failed on immigration reform*”.

Interestingly, editors of CNN also directed accusations towards the Republican Party, redirecting some of the hostility towards their political counterparts for not having

more invested interest in immigration reform (examples are supplemented under ‘Anti-  
Opposition Language’).

## 2. Power relations emblemized through lexicon choices

Relationships of power are often illustrated through the lexical choices of the author (van Dijk, 1995). Intriguingly, a thematic dichotomy of power is intertwined throughout the narrative of all editorials. For example, throughout the first editorial Peek regularly strips President Obama of his power throughout the discourse. She undermines his plan of action (“*President Obama has a plan- lets see if it works*”), and his authority by referring to him as “Mr. Obama” instead of “President Obama”. This practice disseminated throughout the data samples, specifically from FOX contributors. A seemingly innocent prefix such as “Mr.” in this context diminishes the authority of the American leader, figuratively indicating to the reader that Obama does not deserve the title after critics regard his decisions as irresponsible.

Author Liz Peek indirectly affords herself power by acting as the voice of the American people. Throughout the text she proclaims what U.S. citizens comprehend: “*In choosing to sidestep Congress, Mr. Obama is setting a dangerous precedent. The country understands that.*” Notably, she proceeds to highlight a NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll where 48% of citizens disapprove his decision and 38% support his reform. By citing a credible media source to support her claim, Peek is bolstering her argument and providing it with credibility (Chong and Druckman, 2007).

The theme of power also manifests itself in an additional mannerism. The ideation that President Obama doesn’t have the power to act unilaterally on immigration reform and is simply contriving a plan to enhance his popularity is rife throughout each of the

FOX data samples. This is an area of contentious disparity for the two media conglomerates. All of the FOX contributors expressed dismay that Obama didn't have the authority to do what he did when using his executive power. An example of such discourse is found in the eleventh paragraph of editorial two: "*President Obama's executive amnesty is an unprecedented abuse of executive power. I'd invite President Obama to refer to Article 1 Section 8 of the Constitution, which clearly grants the authority to make laws on naturalization to Congress, not the Executive Branch.*" In comparison, CNN contributors across all editorials defend Obama's unilateral actions, taking time to discuss the legality and inform the reader that he was within his constitutional powers. For instance, paragraph twenty of editorial two illustrates: "*What Obama has in mind isn't some kindhearted miracle or the coming of the apocalypse. It's just a legitimate exercise of the power that any president would have under the Constitution and our system of government*" (underline in original). Of the 11 times this frame was mentioned by FOX, 10 instances were claiming Obama had abused his constitutional powers. Comparatively, CNN contributors explained the procedural and legal aspects of the policies 18 times within the editorials, 10 of which were explicitly supportive of his presidential actions. Irrespective if the CNN contributor personally agreed with the President's approach to immigration reform, it seems based on the procedural nature of the discourse, the authors objectively indicated that Obama did not break the law.

### 3. Repetition

Repetition was another syntactic method used to reinforce the author's presuppositions or arguments. For example, FOX contributors Liz Peek and Rep. Mark

Meadows both iterated how President Obama failed the American people regarding immigration reform. The authors continuously reference blame and failure, using loaded language to drive home their points of view. Repeating concepts or ideas is a literary technique to guide the reader's mindset towards the issue at hand. (van Dijk, 1996). By continuously highlighting particular elements of the issue, the author is attempting to direct what in fact the reader *thinks* about regarding immigration policy in the United States. For instance, in FOX editorial four, author Jay Sekulow uses repetition to imply an absolute truth on the topic of immigration reform within the United States: "*The court's meaning is clear: The president's action directly contradicts his legal duty.*" This latter statement is repeated three times throughout the editorial almost in succession. In addition to using iteration to adduce his point, Sekulow strategically presents the text in a visually compelling fashion (compared to the other editorials). For example, each time the statement is alone, centered in the editorial. The final time it is written in a bolder, larger font to assert its importance. This is an attempt to mark the statement with significance, an identifiable take away for the reader to digest.

CNN contributors also used this technique to accentuate their opinions. Author Rubin Nararette uses repetition to entice readers to believe the Republican Party is incorrect in their reasoning. To achieve this, he presents a conservative claim (such as Obama is "*cancelling*" the law) and refutes it with a declarative statement such as "*nonsense*" or "*More nonsense*", then proceeds to explain his point. This systematic approach guides readers to believe that the Republican Party position on DACA and DAPA is fundamentally flawed and that they hold no in depth understanding of the policies in question. Moreover in the forth editorial Nararette drives home his point when

he uses repetition to assert his calls to action: “*Halt the implementation of the immigration program. Halt the legal maneuvering. Halt the irresponsible posturing on funding DHS [Department of Homeland Security].*” The repetitious nature of the concluding statements intensifies the author’s plea for appropriate courses of action.

#### 4. Hyperbole

The discourse created in the editorial is full of emotional appeals and one way this is achieved is through loaded language. For example, President Obama’s reasoning for implementing DAPA is immediately discredited when the author announces his reasons are “*as bogus as they are cynical.*” Peek continues to immediately state that, “*There is no emergency here.*” Imposing her personal opinion on the reader and leaving no alternative for them to see it from anything but her point of view. In the next sentence she uses figurative language to distract the reader from the issue at hand through hyperboles: “In fact, there *are* people who the president *should* be allowing to vault our immigration barriers- for instance, those in Iraq and Afghanistan who aided our troops, acting as interpreters or guides, who are being hunted down and murdered by ISIS and others who hate America” (Italics in original).

#### 5. Figurative Imagery (metaphor)

Figurative language appeared within both media outlets editorial coverage of the immigration policies. Written by self-identified Republican Mark Meadows, the title of the second FOX editorial exemplifies this technique: “Obama’s immigration amnesty: A slap in the face to American voters”. Meadows iterated this specific imagery within the body of the editorial text as well.

CNN contributor Tim Kane also painted a figurative representation of the immigration situation for the reader: “*Watching the flood of immigrant children from Central America seeking, and gaining, entry into the United States, one is struck by the chaos at all levels. It is a crisis, but hardly a surprise.*” The author is using adjectives such as “chaos” and “flood” to describe people and the effectiveness of the United States immigration system. As reported by El Rafeie (2001) and van Dijk (1989), when discussing the migration of groups of people metaphors simulating fluidity (such as a ‘flow’ of ‘flood’) are routinely employed by members of the media. These visually compelling representations are intended to affect the readers’ mental construction of the immigration predicament, implying it would be difficult to contain or seize control of the situation.

## 6. Oversimplification

Oversimplifying an issue is one way writers and politicians attempt to influence their audience. By emphasizing particular elements of an issue and invalidating other points of contention the writer creates the illusion that the situation is straightforward or ‘black and white’.

As an exemplification, in the third FOX editorial the speculation that the President is only motivated by personal gain (opposed to a genuine desire to make positive change to immigration reform) is prevalent throughout the text and notably across all FOX samples. For instance, “*Mr. Obama is not responding to an emergency in the Hispanic community. He’s responding to an emergency at the voting booth- for Democrats.*” As well as the example, “*Mr. Obama is hoping that his announced move to grant almost 5 million*

*people temporary protection from deportation will reclaim Hispanic allegiance, much as his mini Dream Act- the DACA- did in 2012.”*

The author Liz Peek is attempting to educate the audience on what she believes to be the President’s agenda. By oversimplifying the situation the author is narrowing the decision-making processes of the reader, ignoring alternative explanations for Obama’s actions- such as wanting to help immigrants in need of refuge.

Oversimplification of the issues is also present when Peek assigns blame to Obama by dismissing social and legal factors that may have attributed to the influx of immigrants at the Mexico and United States border. She writes,

*“Despite front-page articles in the New York Times and elsewhere blaming a 2008 sex trafficking bill or rampant gang violence in Central America for the crush of illegal youngsters flooding our border, it is clear that the trigger for the sudden influx was President Obama’s campaign-motivated Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA), aka the “Dream Act.”*

*“For the record, countries like El Salvador and Honduras have long been violent. Since the mid-1990s those two countries have ranked in the top ten most violent countries in the world” (Underline in original).*

In an attempt to assert blame to the President, the author is oversimplifying contributing factors to the increase of undocumented immigrants at the U.S. and Mexico border.

#### 7. Lexical choices (e.g. pronouns, adverbs & adjectives)

Lexical choices are imperative to understanding the relationship between social participants in society and reveals underlining ideologies (Fairclough, 1989). For example, negativity seeps through the third FOX editorial, at times illustrated through the choice of verbs and adjectives. The immigration problem isn’t a ‘situation’; it is a ‘catastrophe’; a ‘fiasco’; and a ‘mess’. The choice of descriptive words coaxes the reader

to believe the immigration system is malfunctioning and that the President does not have control.

Furthermore, a disparity in lexical choices to describe the immigration policies was evident between networks. Contributing editors of FOX News almost exclusively described the President's actions as granting "amnesty" to masses of undocumented immigrants. This implies that the immigrants are receiving a permanent pardon for their actions, which is not the case. The technical foundation of the immigration policies in question is that applicable immigrant youth would receive a three-year reprieve from deportation, not an indissoluble pardon to stay indefinitely. Therefore, the consistent systematic exposure to the word 'amnesty' could erroneously shape the reader's perception of the facts.

Another point of interest regarding lexical selection is the specific terminology used to categorize immigrants and the fact it comes from an elite character: "*Congress has clearly stated that illegal aliens should be removed [...]*". The quote highlights potential animosity on the part of the author, FOX contributor Jay Sekulow, as he chooses to use a quote with the loaded term "alien". Presenting a quote from a highly publicized figure (such as a government official) with the term 'alien' to denote an immigrant has negative ramifications, as it builds upon an 'ideological control of discourse' (van Dijk, 1995, p. 26). It builds upon the fear of the unknown placing distance between the reader and the immigrant, creating the illusion that they are opposite entities without commonality. The lexical choices are once again feeding into the idealization of "Us" versus "Them" (van Dijk, 1995). Interestingly, CNN contributor Tim Kane also played into this dichotomy in a similar fashion when referring to

undocumented immigrants, when he says “*unaccompanied alien children*”. An additional example of loaded language from a CNN author appears in the following sentence:

“*When those undocumented college students known as DREAMers first argued for special treatment, [...].*” Emotionally charged words in the former sentence include ‘*those*’ and ‘*first argued for special treatment*’. Referring to a group of people as ‘*those*’ places them in a classification, reducing them to one particular facet of their identity and being. It reinforces the binary concept of “Us” and “Them” once again segregating groups of people and placing them in opposition of one another (van Dijk, 1996).

Similarly, stating someone ‘argued for special treatment’ is implying they are demanding something of which they are not worthy, and that was not intended for them. In the context of immigration reform this has some heavy implications, such as fortifying prejudices against ‘out-group’ members consequentially reinforcing social division and promoting nativism; which is defined as the ‘policy of protecting interests of native inhabitants against those of immigrants’ (dictionary.com).

Both media outlets use language to frame their argument as the only conclusive explanation. FOX contributor Ruben Naravette often presents concepts and ideas as conclusive facts as a persuasion technique to steer his reader’s thoughts. This point is illustrated in the following examples: “*The decision itself comprehensively demonstrates [...]*” / “*The court’s meaning is clear: the president’s action directly contradicts his legal duty.*” / “*All of this is matter of constitutional common sense.*” This type of language leads the reader to believe that the statements are indisputable; there is no room for cognitive dissonance or ambivalence. The intended message from the author is evident and easy for the reader to comprehend, whether it is factually true or not.

## 8.Character attacks

Character attacks are launched at the President from the FOX network continuously depicting him in an infamous fashion; he “*doesn’t care*”; “*he took credit*”; *he is an “imperial president”* and has ‘*failed*’ at many aspects of the job. President Obama is depicted as lacking substance. In the third editorial, Peek uses hyperboles to hook the reader into her inimical character rationalizations:

*“At this point in his presidency, Mr. Obama appears concerned with only one thing- his legacy. He does not seem concerned about his party, or the country. He is obsessed with how history will view his time in office. He should be worried; at the moment his most notable achievements include a widely despised health care bill that may well be dismantled piece by piece for the good of the country and arguably greater racial and class divisions than every before in our history.”*

The above quote demonstrates how subjective Peek’s view is of President Obama and his achievements while in the White House. His intentions for implementing DACA and DAPA are taken into question on multiple occasions from every FOX contributor. Authors use quotes from elite figures (such as the New York Times) to bolster the conception that the President’s motives are self-serving and that he only tackled immigration reform in order to obtain Latino support. In the author’s words, Obama’s actions are “*campaign-motivated*” and disingenuous. His legitimacy and authentic self are constantly in question, often depicted through Peek’s use of air quotes. His “*presidential memos*”, and “*impatience*” with the immigration problem are challenged in this fashion, alluding to the reader that he cannot “*fix*” the problem as he claims. Furthermore, the fourth FOX contributor Jay Sekulow, explicitly declares that Obama as a person is insincere: “*And we must never forget that President Obama’s impatience is*

*itself disingenuous.*” The latter statements do not criticize his political moves, as so much as his personal attributes.

#### 9. False causalities and non sequitur

Authors from FOX attempted to link events without direct correlation in order to justify their claims and opinions. For example, Peek used false causalities and non sequitur to entice the reader of Obama’s shortcomings: “*Mr. Obama’s DACA resulted in the only border crisis in recent times, and also hardened the nations attitudes about immigration.*” She also implies that the President’s terms in office spawned “*arguably greater racial and class divisions than every before in our history*” without backing her claim with statistical evidence. She does in fact mention a Gallup report showing that from 2012 to 2014 the percentage of American citizens who believe immigration allowances should increase within the country had declined by eight percent. Yet, there is no evidence indicating that DACA directly caused this public shift in opinion. Instead, she uses hasty generalizations to imply this fact: “*Chances are the ruckus about this new unpopular move will cause even greater resistance to immigration.*”

Other notable rhetorical devices found within the data sample include appeals to patriotism or tradition, and the use of air quotes. Although his solution is enforcement, a message intrinsic to the first CNN editorial is that all immigrant and refugees should have equal opportunity to come to the United States. Author Tim Kane links this concept to persuasive techniques of appealing to tradition and patriotism: “*The catch is that refugees would have to apply the old fashioned way that has worked for decades, through the U.S. embassies. Such a humane policy would not only honor our heritage, but it also would*

*treat the children of Africa and Asia fairly while stemming a situation that is getting exponentially more dangerous”.*

According to Cappelen and Lepore (2003) the presence of air quotes within text changes its semantic content. Therefore, placing air quotes around particular words is a means to contradict their intended use, giving them a new meaning for the reader.

Intriguingly, FOX contributor Liz Peek uses air quotes as a way to use the President’s past words against him. For example, by placing air quotes around “*urgent humanitarian crisis*”, she is implying that there is in fact no humanitarian crisis, and questions whether Obama’s plan to combat immigration issues with emergency funds will in fact “*fix*” the problem at all.

## **CONCLUSION**

In regards to my main research question (RQ1: *Are the political directions of the Cable News Network and the FOX News Channel reflected in their editorial reporting on the DACA and DAPA immigration policies, and President Obama’s exercise of his executive powers on immigration reform?*) the data sample unveiled supporting evidence of this practice. When reporting on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) immigration programs, the FOX News Channel presented frames which tended to project a pro-Republican ideology. The editorials consistently presented more ‘problem’ frames, emphasizing the negative ramifications of immigration for the country, and frames discussing immigration-related problems for society were prevalent throughout the editorials. These tendencies are consistent with a pro-Republican discourse (Krogstad,

2015). Where The FOX News Channel has an audience who politically favor the conservative party, collectively these mannerisms this could signify the media outlet is presenting content supportive of a conservative narrative. Furthermore, the discourse surrounding President Obama and his executive orders was undeniably negative. Rhetoric within the FOX editorials contained malicious attacks on his character-- seemingly irrelevant to the subject at hand-- as well as maintained an incessant assertion of his failures as President. CNN on the other hand, utilized the 'Depiction of the President and/or DACA/DAPA-- Positive' frame 14 times more than FOX, displaying an amicable disposition towards his presidential efforts.

Supplementary evidence that the media outlets may be presenting information aligned with the beliefs of its audience is found throughout the framing analysis. Cable News Network employed less than half the number of 'Problem POTUS' and 'Problem for society' frames than FOX News. Furthermore, FOX used the 'Cause system (Anti-immigration) frame three times more than CNN.

The political direction of CNN's reporting was also constructed of liberal undertones. CNN editors were more likely to present media frames which highlighted the struggles of immigrants, and use frames promoting system reform that would entail more supportive immigration measures. Furthermore, they were more likely to defend President Obama's actions: instead of dismissively declaring the policies as 'abuses of power' or grants of 'amnesty' as the FOX News Channel did, contributing CNN writers took the time to explain how Obama was in fact within his legal rights by implementing DACA and DAPA, and that he had only done what every other President did before him—use his discretion when implementing executive actions. An additional piece of

supporting evidence that the networks may be creating content that would appease their audience is the plethora of anti-opposition language stemming from both networks.

Numerous rhetorical devices were implemented throughout the editorials by both political networks in order to influence their audience. Particular lexicon choices were selected to impact the readers and at times oversimplify the situation. Contributing editors used repetitive and figurative language to accentuate particular elements of the text.

A limitation to my study is reflected in the methodological procedure and sample size. According to Hertog and McLeod (2001) inductive framing analyses are criticized for being too arduous to replicate and often have too small of a sample size. I would also agree that the subjective nature of coding would make it challenging to reproduce particular findings.

Of significance, Entman (2016) asserts that content bias refers to “consistently slanted framing of mediated communication that promotes the success of a specific interest, party or ideology in competitions to control government power” (p.393). Although my data sample is too small to determine any content bias, a pattern of slant that regularly promotes support for particular interests is undeniably present. Therefore, the findings of this research study acknowledge the media outlets in question display the initial fundamental characteristics of a media slant-- which if sustained overtime--would result in overtly biased reporting.

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**APPENDIX Table 1:** Benson and Wood’s (2015) ‘Problem, Cause and Solution’  
Frames of Undocumented Immigration

Frame	Description	Example from FOX Editorial	Example from CNN Editorial
Problem for Authorities	Politicians are under attack for their stances on immigration; the immigration system produces unintended negative consequences; immigration is undermining diplomatic relations; undocumented immigration unfairly threatens the legal immigration system.	<p><b>Fox # 2. Para. 12a:</b></p> <p>“ [...] to those who willfully broke the law makes a mockery of our legal system and encourages even more lawlessness- potentially with more severe crimes.”</p>	<p><b>CNN #1 Para. 2:</b></p> <p>“U.S. government data shows that <u>10,000</u> "unaccompanied alien children" from <u>non-border countries</u> arrived in 2012, which was triple the normal level.”</p>
Problem for Society	Too many immigrants will enter the country under DACA; the immigration policy threatens safety, security, or culture of U.S.; undocumented youth strains social services.	<p><b>Fox #1. Para. 3a:</b></p> <p>“[...] The flood of young unaccompanied minors across our border is a catastrophe [...] and for the country.”</p>	<p><b>CNN #4 Para. 9a</b></p> <p>“Frankly, the entire thing is a hot, ugly, mess.”</p>
	Immigrants face potential violence, racism, human rights violations, or inhumane treatment while attempting to enter	<p><b>Fox #2. Para 8:</b></p> <p>“Many others tragically never made it. These children risked</p>	<p><b>CNN #4 Para. 8</b></p> <p>“ [...] the reality of the millions of confused undocumented</p>

Problem for Immigrants	the U.S.; immigrants are likely to be exploited, or encounter unsafe work conditions.	exploitation, kidnapping, abuse at the hands of coyotes, and even their lives to make the dangerous trek hundreds of miles through the desert terrain.”	families whose lives and livelihoods are in the balance, and who have no idea how this is going to end.”
No Problem	Immigration (including unauthorized immigration) contributes to society and does not represent a problem- for example, immigrants are good workers and do work others do not want to do; immigrants contribute to local economies; immigrants	Fox #4. Para 17: “[...] I’m not only away of the immense contributions of immigrants to our nation [...]”	CNN #1 Para. 4: “I, like most economists, believe immigration is a big win for the U.S. economy.”
Cause Push factors	Economic crisis, violence, or political persecution drive immigration.	Fox #1 Para. 6a: “Since the mid-1900s those two countries have ranked in the <u>top ten most violent countries in the world.</u> ”	CNN #1 Para. 7: “Do you blame the poorest families throughout Central America for sending their children to the Texas border?”
Cause Pull factors	Immigrant youth come to U.S. to take advantage of educational or economic benefits; deferred deportation motivates immigrant youth to enter U.S.”	Fox #1 Para. 14: “[...] that their children could live without fear of deportation, and have a shot of legal status.”	CNN #1: Para. 4: “[...] 97% of children arriving from non-border countries are able to stay permanently, meaning no deportation.”
Cause system (Pro-immigration)	The immigration system is unnecessarily restrictive, bureaucratic, or time-consuming; government is	Fox #3 Para. 5: “These people are trapped in the immigration queue, and are paying for	CNN #4 Para.1 “For decades, Congress has been talking about fixing

	too strict or brutal in enforcing immigration.	our creaky processes.”	the broken immigration system.”
Cause system (Anti-immigration)	Lack of resources led to weak border control; current regional/international regulations are inadequate to manage immigration.	<b>Fox #1 Para. 16:</b> “An overwhelmed court system and indifferent enforcement means that few will be deported; [...]”	<b>CNN # Para. 5</b> “This is Congress' job, and the problem, to state the obvious, is that Congress is not doing it.”
<b>Solution Enforcement</b>	Enhanced punishment for violations of immigration law, or for hiring, housing, or abetting undocumented immigrants; more resources to strengthen border control and enforcement; more police to combat immigration-related crime; deny immigrants opportunities for work, health care, education, or services so they will self-deport.	<b>Fox #4 Para 4:</b> “The plan would likely include, but not be limited to, immediately securing our southern border, [...]”	<b>CNN #1 Para. 12a:</b> “The common sense policy fix is for Congress to allow border control agents to treat unaccompanied children from non-border states the same way children from Mexico are treated and simply deny entry.”
Solution reform system	The immigration system should be made less complicated and time consuming, more temporary and permanent immigration should be allowed; conditional resident status should be granted to children brought illegally into the country, or to those whose safety will be threatened if they are returned to their country of origin.	<b>Fox #4 Para. 17</b> “ I’m also aware of the need for immigration reform.”	<b>CNN #2 Para. 9:</b> “Options include some common sense items: Eliminating Secure Communities; broadening DACA by eliminating restrictions on how old applicants can be and when they had to have arrived; restating that the enforcement priority should be to remove violent criminals and now housekeepers and students; and

			expanding visa programs for immigrant spouses of U.S. citizens.”
Solution External	Foreign investment and development aid will ease immigration problems; strengthened diplomatic ties will help states resolve their conflicting needs; solving political and military conflicts in other nations will address immigration problems.	Not found.	Not found.
Solution Campaign	Attitude/information campaigns aimed at undocumented immigrants, the public, or authorities will help address immigration problems.	Not found.	Not found.

Table 2: Additional frames coded

Frame	Description	Example from FOX editorial	Example from CNN editorial
Problem POTUS	The influx of undocumented immigrant youth arriving at U.S. / Mexico border is a result of President Obama implementing DACA and DAPA. His actions have harmed the immigration situation in the United States.	<p><b>Fox #3 Para 16a:</b></p> <p>“Mr. Obama’s DACA resulted in the only border crisis in recent times, [...]”</p>	<p><b>CNN #2 Para. 5a:</b></p> <p>“Obama broke his campaign promise to make reform a top issue <u>and eroded trust between immigrant communities and law enforcement [...]”</u></p>
Call to Action	President Obama and/or Congress need to take action regarding immigration reform, to facilitate a long-term solution.	<p><b>Fox #1 Para 1a:</b></p> <p>“Give him the money! Republicans in Congress need to stifle their hostility towards President Obama, and approve his emergency request for funds [...]”</p>	<p><b>CNN #4 Para. 9b</b></p> <p>“Halt the implementation of the immigration program. Halt the legal maneuvering. Halt the irresponsible posturing on funding DHS. Set a deadline to pass legislation.”</p>
		<b>Fox # 2 Para 1:</b>	<b>CNN #4 Para. 5:</b>

Discussing constitutionality of Obama's executive order: DACA/DAPA	President Obama acted outside his presidential rights when he used his executive order to implement DACA (and its successor DAPA); and/or editorial discourse is procedural in nature.	" President Obama has announced his blatantly unconstitutional move"	"At issue is whether President Obama exceeded his powers and tried to legislate."
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**Table 3: Depictions of President Obama and DACA/DAPA**

Frame	Description	Example from FOX editorial	Example from CNN editorial
Depiction of President and DACA/DAPA: Negative	President Obama is a catalyst or at fault for the immigration crisis; his actions are self or politically motivated and not in the best interest of the country.	Fox #4 Para 1  " [...] President Obama's sweeping immigration actions, but so far the score is clear: The Constitution 1, an impatient president, 0."	CNN #2 Para. 2:  "President Barack Obama has failed on immigration policy."
Depiction of President and DACA/DAPA: Positive	Mentions of President Obama and/or discussion surrounding DACA/DAPA is positive or supportive in nature.	Fox #1 Para 17a:  "Republicans should not stand in the way of President Obama's plan to solve this border crisis."	CNN #2 Para. 20  "It's just a <u>legitimate exercise of the power</u> that any president would have under the Constitution and our system of government."

<p>Depiction of President and DACA/DAPA: Neutral</p>	<p>Mentions of President Obama are neutral and/or discussion about DACA/DAPA is neutral or procedural in nature.</p>	<p>Fox #4 Para 18:  “The president is already vowing to appeal, and it’s likely that the final word will once again rest with the Supreme Court of the United States.”</p>	<p>CNN # 2 Para. 10a  “ [...] deferred action for parents of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents, which could result in as many as 4 million to 5 million people getting a temporary reprieve from deportation.”</p>
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Table 4: Additionally themes investigated in the framing analysis:

<p>Anti-Opposition- Republican</p>	<p>Negative sentiment or depiction of the Republican Party.</p>	<p>Fox #1 Para 18 (&amp; 17a)  “Politically, the GOP will lose by being obstructionist.”</p>	<p>CNN # 2 Para. 13  “Republicans have been wrong all along.”</p>
<p>Anti-Opposition- Democratic</p>	<p>Negative sentiment or depiction of the Democratic Party.</p>	<p>Fox #2 Para 2b  “Keep in mind that for the first two years of Obama’s presidency, Democrats controlled the House, Senate and White House—yet he failed to pass immigration reform.”</p>	<p>CNN # Para.  “The cause of the chaos is not violence in those countries, but incoherence in Washington.”</p>

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**Table 5:** Examples from the ‘Problem, Cause, Solution’ Frames; and ‘Problem POTUS’; ‘Call to Action’ and ‘Discussing the constitutionality’ framing analysis for CNN and FOX

Editorial Information	Paragraph	Frame(s) used	Evidence
<p><a href="#">CNN Editorial #1</a></p> <p>“Border crisis is unfair, but no surprise” by Tim Kane</p> <p>July 18, 2014</p>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for authorities &amp; Problem for society</li> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> </ul>	<p>Watching the flood of immigrant children from Central America seeking, and gaining, entry into the United States, one is struck by the chaos at all levels. It is a crisis, but hardly a surprise.</p>
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for authorities &amp; Problem for immigrants</li> </ul>	<p>U.S. government data shows that <u>10,000 "unaccompanied alien children" from nonborder countries</u> arrived in 2012, which was triple the normal level. Twenty-thousand last year came in 2013. Over 40,000 have come so far in the current year.</p>

	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause system (anti-immigration) &amp; Problem for society / Problem for authorities (<i>because strain on resources</i>)</li> </ul>	<p>Yet the number of deportations of such children decreased over the same time span: 2013 deportations were one-fifth the 2008 level, according to the <u>Los Angeles Times</u>. The number of deported children from nonborder countries dropped from 600 to just 95.</p>
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No problem</li> <li>• Solution enforcement</li> </ul>	<p>I, like most economists, believe immigration is a big win for the U.S. economy. I believe arguments about immigrants stealing jobs and eroding the culture are hogwash. I believe that America's generous allowance of over 100,000 refugees through our embassies every year is right in every way. <i>But not this way.</i></p>
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for society &amp; Problem for immigrants</li> </ul>	<p>The crisis at the border is unfair and exploitative. As Sen. John McCain pointed out, how is this fair to the refugees fleeing Syria, Iraq or the Congo?</p>
	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution external?</li> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> </ul>	<p>The reality is the economies of Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala are growing in raw and per capita terms. The cause of the chaos is not violence in those countries, but incoherence in Washington.</p>
	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause push factor.</li> </ul>	<p>Do you blame the poorest families throughout Central America for sending their children to the Texas border? I don't.</p>
	8a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for authorities</li> <li>• Problem for immigrants &amp; Problem for society</li> <li>• Cause pull factor</li> </ul>	<p>This isn't illegal immigration as normally constituted. It's chaos immigration. When essentially 100% of unaccompanied children from select countries are treated as human trafficking victims and given entry, but fewer than 3% are ultimately deported, that's an incentive for chaos.</p>
	8b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause pull factor &amp; problem for authorities</li> <li>• Problem for immigrants</li> </ul>	<p>Thousands of children will be drawn by that opportunity, despite the danger, and some of them will die en route.</p>
	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for authorities</li> <li>• Solution enforcement</li> </ul>	<p>The President's call for \$3.7 billion in new funding will not be effective because it is to be spent on detention and care, roughly \$70,000 per child. The</p>

			administration has hinted but wavered about resolving the policy incentives that would end the surge immediately.
	10a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause pull factor</li> </ul>	By my calculation, 97% of children arriving from nonborder countries are able to stay permanently, meaning no deportation. Most of these children will avoid deportation hearings and convert to illegal immigrants, making them ripe for further exploitation
	10b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause pull factor</li> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> </ul>	But from the view in Honduras, the overwhelming odds of entry success trump any kind of warning from President Obama. To paraphrase, policy speaks louder than words.
	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call to Action</li> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> <li>• Cause system (anti-immigration)</li> </ul>	It would be helpful, to say the least, for the House and the Senate to act. The 2008 law that requires the quasi-asylum is the crux of the problem, but President Obama's 2010 executive action known as DACA also plays a role.
	12a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution enforcement</li> <li>• Problem for society</li> </ul>	The common sense policy fix is for Congress to allow border control agents to treat unaccompanied children from nonborder states the same way children from Mexico are treated and simply deny entry. Anything less is an inhumane incentive for the chaos to continue.
	12b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution reform system</li> </ul>	Politicians are no doubt skittish that such a simple fix will appear insensitive, but that can easily be redressed by including in the same bill an increase in the number of refugees admitted to the United States through its embassies.
	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause pull factor</li> <li>• Solution reform system</li> </ul>	Traditionally, 150,000 refugees and asylum seekers from war-torn countries around the world were granted permanent residency in the United States. Why not raise that to 200,000? Or 300,000?
	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for immigrants</li> </ul>	The catch is that refugees would have to apply the old fashioned way that has worked for decades, through the U.S. embassies. Such a humane policy would not only honor our heritage, but it also would treat the children of Africa and Asia fairly while stemming a

situation that is getting exponentially more dangerous.

[END]

Editorial info	Paragraph	Frame(s) used	Textual Evidence
<p><u>FOX News Editorial 2</u></p> <p><i>“Obama’s immigration amnesty: A slap in the face to American voters”</i></p> <p>By: Rep. Mark meadows</p> <p>November 20, 2014</p>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> <li>• Discussing the constitutionality</li> </ul>	<p>For six years President Obama has failed to lead on any meaningful immigration reform. Now, following a sweeping Republican victory on Election Day and just over a month before a new Republican Senate majority will take over, President Obama has announced his blatantly unconstitutional move to grant amnesty to at least 5 million illegal immigrants by executive order.</p>
	2a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> <li>• Problem for immigrants</li> </ul>	<p>For years, President Obama has chastised Republicans, used immigrants as props for political purposes, and time and again deflected responsibility from his own party’s failure to act on immigration reform.</p>
	2b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> </ul>	<p>Keep in mind that for the first two years of Obama’s presidency, Democrats controlled the House, Senate and White House—yet he failed to pass immigration reform.</p>
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> </ul>	<p>So why the rush to grant amnesty now?</p>
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution enforcement</li> <li>• Cause system (anti-immigration)</li> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> </ul>	<p>President Obama knows that in January the new Republican House and Senate plan to take action on a long-term solution to our nation’s immigration problem. The plan would likely include, but not be limited to, immediately securing our southern border, developing an effective legal immigration system that meets the needs of our nation’s employers, and repealing Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which led to the humanitarian crisis at the border earlier this year.</p>
	5a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause-system (anti-immigration)</li> </ul>	<p>After six years of Democrat’s inaction, President Obama doesn’t want Republicans to get even an ounce of credit for finally addressing our nation’s broken immigration system.</p>

	5b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> </ul>	But further, by granting mass amnesty during the lame duck right before members go home for thanksgiving, President Obama is setting a divisive tone for the immigration battle, effectively poisoning the well for Republican-led bipartisan reform next year.
	5c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> </ul>	This is an effort by the White House to sabotage the best shot at a long-term immigration solution since this president took office—and all to make sure Republicans don't receive credit.
	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for society &amp; Problem POTUS &amp; Problem for immigrants</li> </ul>	Simply put, President Obama's immigration strategy is all about politics and getting credit rather than about families and people. This is not what the American people deserve.
	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem POTUS</li> <li>• Cause pull factor</li> </ul>	President Obama's DACA gave us a glimpse into the problems that will arise from granting amnesty to million of illegal immigrants. DACA led to a mass influx of illegal immigrant children crossing the Mexican border into the U.S. who came believing they would likely be able to stay.
	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems for authorities</li> <li>• Problems for immigrants</li> </ul>	Between October 2013 and July 2014 more than 63,000 unaccompanied children were caught at the border. Many others tragically never made it. These children risked exploitation, kidnapping, abuse at the hands of coyotes, and even their lives to make the dangerous trek hundreds of miles through the desert terrain.
	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause pull factors</li> <li>• Problems for authorities &amp; Problems for immigrants</li> </ul>	The president's latest amnesty move signals to millions in Central and South America and U.S. laws don't hold any real weight anymore, and if they illegally enter the U.S., they'll likely be able to stay. This creates a dangerous environment of lawlessness and puts immigrant and American families at risk.
	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for immigrants &amp; Problem for society</li> </ul>	Notably, the majority of Americans did not support executive action on immigration. Among Americans of Latino descent, only 43 percent supported executive amnesty, according to an NBC/WSJ poll.
	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing the constitutionality</li> </ul>	Further, President Obama's executive amnesty is an unprecedented abuse of executive power. I'd invite President Obama to refer to Article 1 Section 8 of the Constitution, which clearly grants the authority to make laws on naturalization to Congress, not the Executive Branch.

	12a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems for authorities</li> <li>• Cause pull factor &amp; Problem for society</li> </ul>	Granting amnesty to those who willfully broke the law makes a mockery of our legal system and encourages even more lawlessness—potentially more severe crimes than entering the U.S. illegally.
	12b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems for authorities</li> <li>• Cause pull factor &amp; Problem for society</li> </ul>	It also does a disservice to those who followed the legal routes to gain entry into the country and sends the message that lawlessness will be tolerated—in fact, it will be rewarded.
	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for society</li> </ul>	The American people spoke on Election Day. The Republican victory wasn't simply a referendum on failed Democratic policies pushed by the White House and Harry Reid—it was also a referendum on the inability of Congress and the White House to work together to get things done.
	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems for immigrants</li> <li>• Problem for society</li> </ul>	President Obama's decision to bypass Congress and to act unilaterally on amnesty is a slap in the face to American voters, sends the wrong signal to immigrants, and jeopardizes the first real shot at bipartisan, long-term immigration reform.
	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem for society</li> </ul>	Once again, it is politics over people for this administration.  [END]

## MRP Analysis Section 2

**Table 6:** Examples from the 'Depictions of President Obama and DACA/DAPA'; 'Anti-Opposition' framing analysis and use of rhetorical devices

Editorial info	Paragraph	Frame(s) used	Textual Evidence
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<p>FOX News Editorial 2</p> <p><i>“Obama’s immigration amnesty: A slap in the face to American voters”</i></p> <p>By: Rep. Mark meadows</p> <p>November 20, 2014</p>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negative</li> <li>Loaded language</li> </ul>	<p>For six years President Obama has failed to lead on any meaningful immigration reform. Now, following a sweeping Republican victory on Election Day and just over a month before a new Republican Senate majority will take over, President Obama has announced his blatantly unconstitutional move to grant amnesty to at least 5 million illegal immigrants by executive order.</p>
	2a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negative &amp; Anti-opposition- Democratic</li> <li>Loaded language</li> </ul>	<p>For years, President Obama has chastised Republicans, used immigrants as props for political purposes, and time and again deflected responsibility from his own party’s failure to act on immigration reform.</p>
	2b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anti-opposition- Democratic</li> </ul>	<p>Keep in mind that for the first two years of Obama’s presidency, Democrats controlled the House, Senate and White House—yet he failed to pass immigration reform.</p>
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loaded language</li> </ul>	<p>So why the rush to grant amnesty now?</p>
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negative</li> <li>Loaded language</li> </ul>	<p>President Obama knows that in January the new Republican House and Senate plan to take action on a long-term solution to our nation’s immigration problem. The plan would likely include, but not be limited to, immediately securing our southern border, developing an effective legal immigration system that meets the needs of our nation’s employers, and repealing Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which led to the humanitarian crisis at the border earlier this year.</p>
	5a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loaded language</li> <li>Anti-opposition- Democratic &amp; Negative</li> </ul>	<p>After six years of Democrat’s inaction, President Obama doesn’t want Republicans to get even an ounce of credit for finally addressing our nation’s broken immigration system.</p>
	5b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loaded language</li> <li>Negative</li> </ul> <p><i>*Idiom: poisoning the well</i></p>	<p>But further, by granting mass amnesty during the lame duck right before members go home for thanksgiving, President Obama is setting a divisive tone for the immigration battle, effectively poisoning the well for Republican-led bipartisan reform next year.</p>

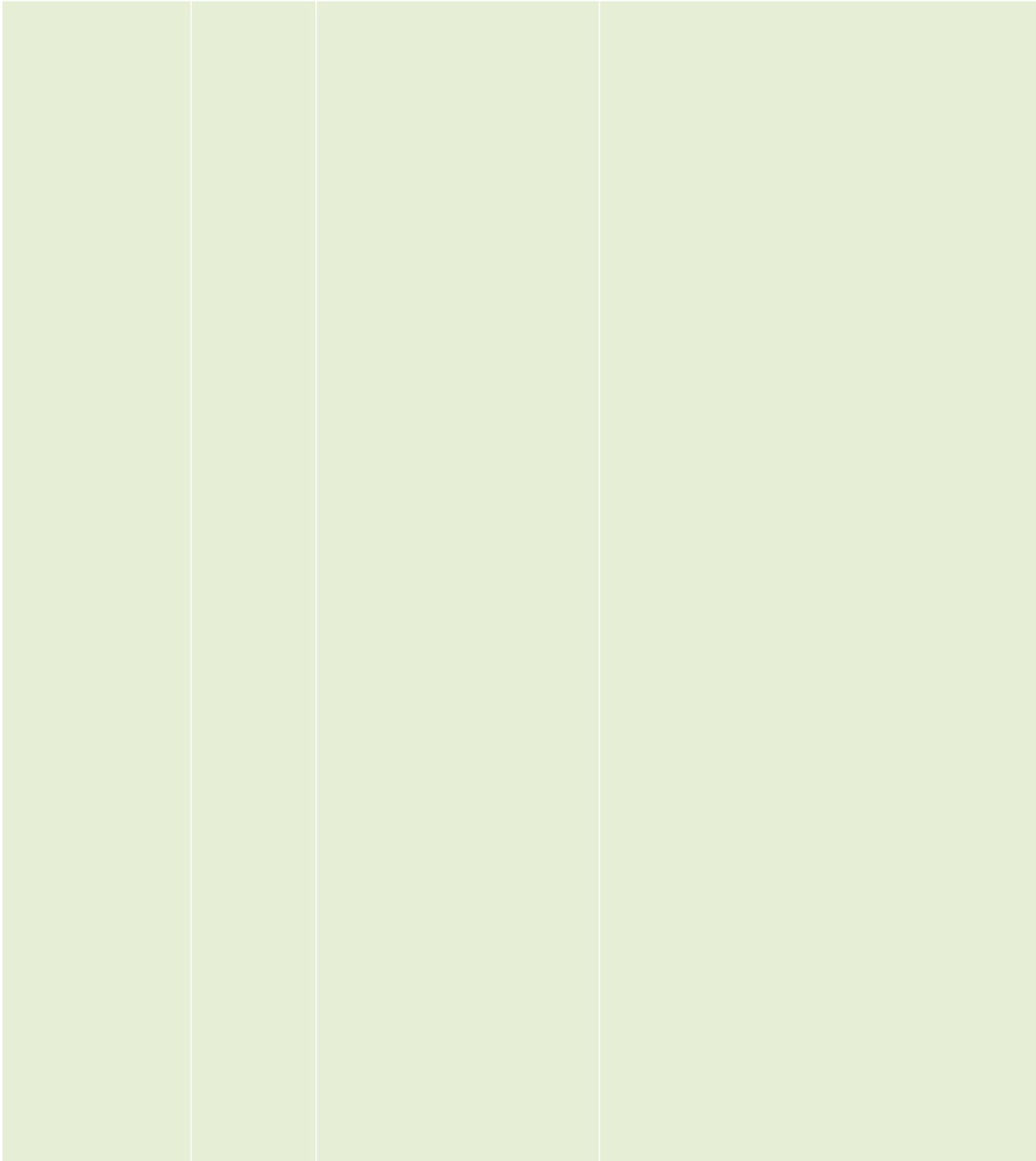
	5c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative &amp; Anti-opposition-Democratic</li> <li>• Loaded language</li> </ul>	This is an effort by the White House to sabotage the best shot at a long-term immigration solution since this president took office—and all to make sure Republicans don't receive credit.
	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative</li> </ul>	Simply put, President Obama's immigration strategy is all about politics and getting credit rather than about families and people. This is not what the American people deserve.
	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loaded language</li> <li>• Negative</li> </ul>	President Obama's DACA gave us a glimpse into the problems that will arise from granting amnesty to million of illegal immigrants. DACA led to a mass influx of illegal immigrant children crossing the Mexican border into the U.S. who came believing they would likely be able to stay.
	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neutral</li> </ul>	Between October 2013 and July 2014 more than 63,000 unaccompanied children were caught at the border. Many others tragically never made it. These children risked exploitation, kidnapping, abuse at the hands of coyotes, and even their lives to make the dangerous trek hundreds of miles through the desert terrain.
	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative</li> <li>• Loaded language-</li> </ul>	The president's latest amnesty move signals to millions in Central and South America and U.S. laws don't hold any real weight anymore, and if they illegally enter the U.S., they'll likely be able to stay. This creates a dangerous environment of lawlessness and puts immigrant and American families at risk.
	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loaded language</li> <li>• Negative</li> </ul>	Notably, the majority of Americans did not support executive action on immigration. Among Americans of Latino descent, only 43 percent supported executive amnesty, according to an NBC/WSJ poll.
	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative</li> <li>• Loaded language</li> </ul>	Further, President Obama's executive amnesty is an unprecedented abuse of executive power. I'd invite President Obama to refer to Article 1 Section 8 of the Constitution, which clearly grants the authority to make laws on naturalization to Congress, not the Executive Branch.
	12a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loaded language</li> <li>• Negative</li> </ul>	Granting amnesty to those who willfully broke the law makes a mockery of our legal system and encourages even more lawlessness—potentially

			more severe crimes than entering the U.S. illegally.
	12b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative</li> <li>• Loaded language</li> </ul>	It also does a disservice to those who followed the legal routes to gain entry into the country and sends the message that lawlessness will be tolerated—in fact, it will be rewarded.
	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loaded language</li> <li>• Anti-opposition- Democratic</li> <li>• Negative</li> </ul>	The American people spoke on Election Day. The Republican victory wasn't simply a referendum on failed Democratic policies pushed by the White House and Harry Reid—it was also a referendum on the inability of Congress and the White House to work together to get things done.
	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative</li> <li>• Loaded language</li> </ul> <p><i>*Idiom: slap in the face</i></p>	President Obama's decision to bypass Congress and to act unilaterally on amnesty is a slap in the face to American voters, sends the wrong signal to immigrants, and jeopardizes the first real shot at bipartisan, long-term immigration reform.
	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative &amp; Anti-opposition- Democratic</li> </ul>	Once again, it is politics over people for this administration.  [END]

Editorial info	Paragraph	Frame(s) used	Evidence
<p><a href="#">CNN Editorial #2</a></p> <p><i>“Chill out; it’s not an impeachable offense”</i></p> <p>By: Ruben Nararrette</p> <p>November 16, 2014</p>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Loaded language</b></li> <li>• Neutral</li> <li>• <b>Negative</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Like misery, failure loves company.</b> Look at the immigration debate and how both liberals and conservatives—and elected officials in both parties—<b>bungle it.</b></p>
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Negative</b></li> <li>• <b>Loaded language</b></li> <li>• <b>Positive</b></li> <li>• <b>Anti-opposition-Republican</b></li> </ul>	<p>President Barack Obama <b>has failed on immigration policy.</b> But now <b>that he appears to be poised to take executive action to fix some of what’s broken with the country’s immigration system,</b> Republicans in Congress sound like they’re about to overreact and <b>join him in that failure.</b></p>
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Loaded language</b></li> <li>• <b>Anti-Opposition-Republican?</b></li> </ul>	<p>Conservatives love to stir their flock by pushing the narrative that Obama is a staunch supporter of <b>“amnesty”</b> and that the President has always been in lockstep with immigration reform advocates.</p>
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Positive</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>That’s fiction.</b> It’s been a rocky relationship. That’s because Obama belongs to that wing of the Democratic Party that hasn’t been interested in legalizing the undocumented and creating more competition in the job market for U.S. workers.</p>
	5a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Negative</b></li> <li>• <b>Loaded language</b></li> </ul>	<p>Obama broke his campaign promise to make reform a top issue <b>and eroded trust between immigrant communities and law enforcement by expanding 100-fold</b> the program known as Secure Communities, which <b>ropes</b> local police into enforcing federal immigration law.</p>
	5b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Loaded language</b></li> <li>• <b>Negative</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>He tried to fend off critics</b> who wanted him to slow deportations by claiming that he didn’t have the power to act “as a king”, <b>only to later flip-flop and do just that</b> during his 2012 re-election campaign when he unveiled Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).</p>
	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Negative</b></li> <li>• <b>Loaded language</b></li> </ul>	<p>Obama deported a record 2 million people in five years, divided hundreds of thousands of families, failed to deal effectively with thousands of child refugees who <b>streamed</b> across the U.S. –Mexico border last summer and then broke another promise when he said he would take executive action on immigration before the midterm elections <b>but blinked.</b></p>
	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Neutral</b></li> </ul>	<p>Now, according to news reports that look like a trial balloon from the White House, Obama might, as early as this week, take unilateral action to offer several million illegal immigrants a temporary reprieve from deportation and perhaps even give some of them work permits.</p>



	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loaded language</li> <li>Positive</li> </ul>	Options include some common sense items: Eliminating Secure Communities; broadening DACA by eliminating restrictions on how old applicants can be and when they had to have arrived; restating that the enforcement priority should be to remove violent criminals and now housekeepers and students; and expanding visa programs for immigrant spouses of U.S. citizens.
	10a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neutral</li> </ul> <p><i>*idiom: upset the apple cart</i></p>	But it's the final item on the list that could really upset the apple cart: deferred action for parents of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents, which could result in as many as 4 million to 5 million people getting a temporary reprieve from deportation
	10b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loaded language</li> <li>Neutral</li> </ul>	When those undocumented college students known as DREAMers first argued for special treatment, the claim was based on the simple idea that they were brought here as children and thus didn't intentionally choose to break the law.
	11a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neutral</li> </ul>	Fair enough. But the same thing can't be said of their parents, who did intentionally break the law.
	11b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negative</li> </ul>	Now what? Is there a new argument?
	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loaded language <i>Implying stereotype of 'anchor babies'</i></li> </ul>	Besides, if Obama offers deferred action to parents, it will validate what conservatives have always insisted about how the U.S.-born children of illegal immigrants can be used to keep their parents from being deported.
	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive</li> <li>Anti-opposition-Republican</li> </ul>	That has never been the case. Parents get deported all the time, and their U.S.-citizen kids either go with them or stay on this side of the border and get put in foster care. Republicans have been wrong all along. Now, if he goes too far, Obama could prove them right.
	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neutral</li> </ul>	If the President follows through on the proposed course of action, both sides will need to calm down.



	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative</li> <li>• Neutral</li> </ul>	<p>Those on the left should hold their applause. <b>By ending the deportation juggernaut, the President would merely be putting out a fire that he started.</b> Besides, this is just a temporary reprieve that would require the undocumented to surrender to law enforcement officials, get fingerprinted and all the rest. <b>And it could be revoked by the next president.</b></p>
	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative</li> <li>• Loaded language</li> </ul>	<p>Finally, this is not what Obama promised way back when – that he would work aggressively with Congress to pass legislation that would permanently improve the lives of millions. This isn't reform. It's "reform lite."</p>
	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive</li> <li>• Anti-opposition-Republican</li> </ul>	<p>Yet at the same time, those on the right need to rein in their scorn. In the post 9/11 era, conservatives shouldn't need a reminder of something they've been telling us for years: how sweeping can be the executive power of the president. As head of the executive branch, Obama naturally has the power to set priorities for the enforcement of immigration law.</p>
	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-opposition-Republican</li> <li>• Loaded language</li> <li>• Positive because defending him?</li> </ul>	<p>Republicans have no trouble deflecting criticism by reminding Latino voters that Obama is in charge of deportations. So, instead of threatening the suicidal tantrums of a government shutdown or impeachment, conservatives should pipe down and let him be in charge of deportations. That doesn't just mean deciding who goes but also who stays.</p>
	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-opposition-Republican</li> </ul>	<p>Besides, Republicans like to talk tough about illegal immigration and the need to uphold the "rule of law" but that slogan would mean more coming from them if they didn't always run away from enforcing those laws that target the root of illegal immigration: U.S. employers who hire the undocumented, many of whom contribute to the re-election campaigns of Republican lawmakers.</p>

	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive</li> <li>• Loaded language</li> </ul> <p><i>*stark comparison: miracle - apocalypse</i></p>	What Obama has in mind isn't some kindhearted miracle or the coming of the apocalypse. It's just a legitimate exercise of the power that any president would have under the Constitution and our system of government.
	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neutral</li> </ul>	<p>I know that isn't sexy, or inspiring, or inflammatory. It won't help the parties fundraise. But it does have the advantage of being true.</p> <p>[END]</p>

**Table 7: Frequency of Frames found in Editorial Data Sample**

Frame	FOX Editorials					CNN Editorials				
<i>Editorial #</i>	1	2	3	4	T	1	2	3	4	T
Problem for Society	6	6	6	2	20	5	0	1	3	7
Problem for Immigrants	4	6	8	1	19	5	5	4	6	20
Problem for Authorities	4	3	5	5	17	6	5	2	3	16
No Problem	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
Cause pull factors	8	4	2	2	16	5	4	2	0	11
Cause push factors	2	0	1	0	3	1	0	0	0	1
Cause system (Pro-immigration)	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	1

Cause system (Anti-immigration)	2	2	2	0	6	2	0	0	0	2
Solution enforcement	1	1	1	0	3	3	0	1	0	4
Solution external	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Solution reform system	0	0	0	2	2	2	3	3	2	10
Solution campaign	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Problem POTUS	9	9	12	13	43	4	7	4	3	18
Call to Action	3	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	4	5
Discussing the constitutionality of Obama's executive order: DACA/DAPA	1	2	1	7	11	0	1	14	3	18
Depiction of President and DACA/DAPA: Negative	18	16	13	10	57	9	8	6	9	32
Depiction of President and DACA/DAPA: Positive	1	0	0	0	1	1	7	6	0	14
Depiction of President and DACA/DAPA: Neutral	8	1	6	3	18	3	8	7	5	23
Anti-Opposition- Republican	2	0	0	0	2	0	6	6	2	14

Anti-Opposition-Democrat	1	6	4	6	17	1	0	1	0	2
Loaded Language (rhetorical devices)	18	15	14	14	61	7	13	9	4	33