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# REPACKAGING THE REACH OF DREAMS: NEWS COVERAGE OF DACA RESCINDMENT BY THREE NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS ON TWITTER

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**REPACKAGING THE REACH OF DREAMS:  
NEWS COVERAGE OF DACA RESCINDMENT BY THREE NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS ON  
TWITTER**

By

Megan L. Pietruszewski

A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

In Rhetoric, Theory and Culture

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This thesis has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE in Rhetoric, Theory and Culture.

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This project is dedicated to my grandpa, Thaddeus Pietruszewski, the son of Polish immigrants. He knew the value of family and passed it on. Thank you, Grandpa, for teaching us to celebrate each moment as the best one ever.

## **List of abbreviations**

DACA stands for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program created by President Obama in June 2012. The program is referred to as DACA throughout the majority of this thesis.



## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the frames used by three news organizations to cover the rescindment of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The rescindment of DACA was a pivotal transition period open to new immigration policy, and frames used in the news coverage of DACA are important as frames influence public opinion and possible future immigration policy. This study uses corpus linguistic methods and Van Gorp's inductive framing analysis to explore how a complex political decision like DACA rescindment is covered in condensed news stories on Twitter as well as in full-length news articles. The Executive Critique frame, which places blame on President Trump as the problem of DACA rescindment, is the most common frame of both full-length news articles and Tweeted news articles. The Public Resistance frame, showing opposition to DACA rescindment by members of the public, is used more often in Tweeted news articles than in full-length news articles likely because of the salient visuals accompanying Tweeted news stories. Because visuals play a role in framing, journalists should capitalize on the potential of visuals in Tweeted news stories and balance using Human Interest frames and political frames like the Executive Critique frame. Using visuals to show DACA as human issue that promotes common ground, rather than as a divisive political issue, could be more productive in advancing comprehensive immigration reform, which failed in the six-month window President Trump gave to phase-out the DACA program.

# 1 Introduction

With two-thirds of Americans using social media to access a portion of their news, features like tweets, posts, shares, likes, and comments are changing the way Americans are receiving and engaging with news (Shearer & Gottfried, 2017). Facebook dominates as the leading social networking site that serves as a source of news, with almost half (45%) of U.S. adults using Facebook to access news content. The percentage of U.S. adults who receive news from Twitter (11%), Snapchat (5%), and Youtube (18%) has increased since 2016 (Shearer & Gottfried, 2017). As new platforms emerge as attractive options for news organizations to disseminate news content, the same enduring value of journalism to promote social responsibility and inform the public has to adapt to shorter attention spans, shorter character limits, and increased reach beyond initially-targeted audiences.

Twitter as a specific social media platform presents advantages for news organizations because of its speed and reach (Hong, 2012; Armstrong & Gao, 2010). News agencies can disseminate stories and information to an audience able to participate with these stories by commenting, favoriting, or resharing them (Hong, 2012; Armstrong & Gao, 2010). News stories have a reach beyond those who ‘follow’ the news organization, as a follower of *The Washington Post* may reshare a @washingtonpost article to their feed which then shows up to their respective followers, regardless if they follow @washingtonpost or not (Hong, 2012). The “participatory and portable” characteristics of Twitter are important ways interaction

with news stories is changing in a digital world (Hong, 2012). Additionally, with the diminishing number of print newspaper subscriptions, the use of Twitter by news organization helps drive traffic to their online sites (Hong, 2012). While Twitter may not be replacing conventional news outlets, it is certainly adding another platform where citizens read and share news (Rosenstiel, Sonderman, Loker, Ivancin, & Kjarval, 2015).

However, even as the ability to access and share news on Twitter has potentially positive consequences for the dissemination of important political, cultural, and business topics, a limitation of Twitter is the condensation of news stories. Complex issues are condensed into shareable, engaging story “previews” that often route Twitter users back to the news organization’s homepage where subscription access may limit the digestion of the entire news story. Online newspapers frequently set a limit of news articles that nonsubscribers may view per day. As an example, *The New York Times* permits five articles to be viewed per day before blocking content (Smith, 2017). The story preview (often published with a Tweeted message above an image, a large image, title of article, and short capture below the title) may be all the news a viewer receives about that topic, depending on their financial subscription to the journal or their interest in accessing and reading a full-length story.

Increasingly, it is important to examine how news organizations are transmitting news events on a platform where Americans citizens are turning for news updates both from established news organizations and updates from a prominent Twitter user,

President Donald Trump, who frequently communicates with the American public via his personal Twitter account @realDonaldTrump. Historically, U.S. presidents have used the latest technology to communicate with the public, tracing back to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's fireside chats, President Eisenhower's televised fireside chats and creation of the first White House TV studio, President Kennedy's "uncut and live" press conferences, and President Obama's initiating of @POTUS, the first U.S. President Twitter account (Keith, 2016; Kumar, 2011; Fahey, 2017). In all of these media, Presidents have established a relationship with the press to inform the public of presidential activities, presenting not only policy, but also themselves to the American public (Kumar, 2011).

While President Trump's use of a personal Twitter account while in office may be unprecedented, Martha Kumar (2011) of the White House Transition Project states that "since the Reagan years, presidents have searched for ways they can respond to reporters' queries but do so in environments that suit their own strengths" ("Post Kennedy Years"). President Trump continues to use his personal Twitter account while in office to inform Americans about policy decisions, visits with international leaders, terrorist attacks and national disasters, and promote his campaign slogan, "Make America great again!" (Keith, 2016). Perhaps the most unique characteristic of President Trump's use of social media is his deliberative bypassing of the press and his criticism of the media for promoting "fake news." Some of his Tweets address what he refers to as

“the failing *New York Times*,” which has the most Twitter followers of any American newspaper (“Top 100 Most Followed Users,” 2018).

In one Twitter update, President Trump tweeted his decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, calling on Congress to take action within six months (Trump, 2017). The DACA program was an executive order providing a temporary immigration solution that issued two-year work permits to undocumented youth so they could legally live and work in the United States. The program comes out of a long history of federal immigration policy over the centuries that has influenced the number and types of immigrants admitted to the United States, shifting from a quota-system to a family-reunification system (Paret, 2014; Alarcon, 2011). The DREAM Act, intended to provide a permanent pathway to citizenship for undocumented youth, has failed to pass on several introductions to Congress (Schmid, 2013; Gonzales, Terriquez, & Rusczyk, 2014). As journalists cover major political decisions like DACA rescindment, the challenge is representing a complex issue that is then relayed in a condensed package to audiences on Twitter.

### **1.1.1 Rationale**

Covering immigration policy is a difficult task for journalists. Previous studies have analyzed the news representation of immigrants as criminals, victims, economic burdens or as legislative issues (Kim et al., 2011; Chavez & Hoewe, 2012; Branton & Dunaway, 2009; Van Gorp, 2005; Kinefuchi & Cruz, 2015; Guerrero & Campo, 2012;

Chavez, Whiteford & Hoewe, 2010; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010; Ehmer & Kothari, 2016). Frames promote a certain interpretation of an issue (Entman, 1993). News framing in relation to immigration is problematic because it tends to represent the immigrant as something easier to understand, as the 'Other.' Although the number of immigrants in the U.S. has increased steadily since the 1970s ("U.S. Immigration Trends," 2018), there has been a much longer history of dividing society into 'Us' and 'Them' categories. Edward Said (1979) traces Othering to European colonialism where cultural texts represent the 'Oriental' as the Other and exterior to European identity. In more recent context, he writes that in the "electronic, postmodern world...there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, the films, and all the media's resources have forced information into more and more standardized molds" (p.34) Stuart Hall (1997) notes that historical stereotyping of Blacks in America has lingered into contemporary representations in cinema and popular culture, as well. This stereotyping and representation as the Other is dangerous because it creates and maintains unequal power relations between groups (Hall, 1997; Said, 1979). Speaking about Orientalism, Said (1979) writes that this representation used categories of separation to justify domination and superiority. In today's context, undocumented immigrants do not share the same political power or recognition as Americans with citizenship status, but public policy enacting a pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients could shift the power relations, moving recipients away from the category of

Other. Public opinion influences public policy, and public opinion can be influenced by news coverage, which relays information and frames events to the public.

The news coverage of President Trump's announcement to end DACA has implications for how Americans understand the policy issue, and also for how they understand the Other (in this case, the undocumented immigrant) through digital environments like Twitter where everything takes place in a small and condensed package. This study examines news content from three major news organizations in two digital platforms: on websites and official Twitter accounts. *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post* have official Twitter accounts with approximately 40.6 million, 15.3 million, and 11.7 million followers, respectively, as of the end of 2017. Coverage of DACA rescindment by these news organizations, among others, may have long-term implications for the construction of possible public opinion on DACA, which may influence a public policy decision offering a permanent pathway to citizenship for undocumented youth. Analysis of what frames are constructed in news stories pertaining to DACA rescindment may offer cultural insights into how immigrants (undocumented and documented) are being received into American society, as well.

News organizations use Twitter for various purposes and to publish a variety of content, such as videos, live blogs, and stand-alone news updates. As an example, *The Wall Street Journal* (@WSJ) posted a link to their Snapchat story news feed of Jeff Session's announcement of DACA rescindment. Although outside the limits of the

current study, more exploration into the types of Tweets and frames constructed in these various “genres” of Tweets is worthwhile as new forms of interaction and engagement with news content emerge. For the purposes of this study, only Tweets linked to a full news story covering DACA rescindment are analyzed.

### **1.1.2 Research Questions**

This study seeks to understand the possible implications that frames covering DACA rescindment could have on public opinion, and thus, future public policy. This broad question cannot be answered without a comprehensive audience analysis, which is beyond the scope of this study. Thus, this research project attempts to understand how the American public could be understanding DACA rescindment through the frames used in its news coverage. What frames are used by full-length online news stories? When these news stories are repackaged on Twitter, how do the frames differ, if they do? To answer in part how the public is responding to DACA rescindment, how does the audience interact with these stories on Twitter per number of Replies, Retweets, and Like features? What is the relation between audience interaction per number of Replies, Retweets, and Like features and the frames used in Tweets?



## 2 Review of Literature

### 2.1 Twitter and News Organizations

Twitter serves a new form of news dissemination. News organizations are capitalizing on Twitter to spread news quickly and to engage with audiences (Farhi, 2009). Previous studies have examined how news organizations may use Twitter in different ways. Armstrong and Gao (2010) determined through a content analysis of 361 Tweets from a combination of regional, local, and national news organizations that most news organizations used Twitter posts to drive traffic to their online news sites. They found the topic of most Tweets (just the Tweeted messages themselves, not the links included in the Tweets) related to crime, public affairs, and lifestyle pieces. In addition to the traditional publication of news on such topics, news organizations use Twitter to publish breaking news. As one example of news organizations publishing breaking news on Twitter, Palser (2009) notes that Twitter was used by the *Los Angeles Times* and San Diego public radio station KPBS to publish evacuation updates and information on shelter locations during southern California wildfires in 2007. Similarly, Armstrong and Gao (2010) note that journalists could use Twitter to publish important public service updates, like road closures or weather warnings. However, their content analysis of Tweets from nine major news organizations showed a mere 4.7% of sampled tweets published breaking news, compared to 86.7% that served to steer traffic to the

news organization's website by including links published in the Twitter messages<sup>1</sup>.

Palser (2009) states that many news organizations have an automatic feed that publishes content from online websites to the official Twitter account, but the platform could be used to publish breaking news and as a "stand alone channel...[to] post self-contained updates that don't require the user to click on a Web page" (Palser, 2009, p.54).

Major news organizations are adapting to Twitter in different ways. *The Washington Post* (@washingtonpost) references "Tweet-length breaking news, analysis from around the world" in its official Twitter profile. The official account (@WSJ) of *The Wall Street Journal* describes itself as publishing "Breaking news and features from the WSJ." *The New York Times'* (@nytimes) profile advertises, "Where the conversation begins. Follow for breaking news, special reports, RTs of our journalists and more. Visit <http://nyti.ms/2FVHq9v> to share news tips." *The New York Times* main official Twitter account (@nytimes) uses RSS feed to automatically publish content from their websites (nytimes.com) to their main Twitter feed. Dave Winer wrote the program that channels content from nytimes.com to @nytimes on Twitter, stating that on @nytimes, "all you'll

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that news organizations may be using Twitter to publish more "stand alone" content since Armstrong and Gao's 2010 study. The researcher was unable to find more current studies differentiating the types of Tweets (breaking news or driving traffic to site) used by news organizations.

ever see in this stream are links to stories on the NYT websites” (Winer, 2014). *The New York Times* does have more targeted, official affiliated Twitter accounts like New York Times World (@nytimesworld), New York Times Books (@nytimesbooks), NYT Politics (@nytpolitics), and NYT Business (@nytimesbusiness) to reference a few. There are also NYT reporters and editors who maintain Twitter accounts affiliated with the newspaper. In summary, although *The New York Times* main Twitter account (@nytimes) limits itself to publishing content strictly from the website through RSS feed, there are other accounts that may personalize news or disseminate breaking news.

Other news organizations maintain their official news accounts on Twitter differently. Social media editors play a role in publishing and editing content found on news organization’s Twitter accounts. A framing analysis by Wasike (2013) of 950 tweets published by four national newspapers and four major TV stations suggests that social media editors control content that emphasizes technology and human interest frames above conflict or economic frames. The “gate keeping” potential of social media editors is similar to the noted subjective potential of traditional print editors to select news content that fits their “own set of experiences, attitudes and expectations” (White, 1950). Wasike’s (2013) study raises questions about how content published on Twitter may differ from news content published on news websites.

The function of news content published by major news organizations, to drive traffic to their websites or to publish breaking news to inform the public, is likely

influenced by financial motivations on behalf of the newspapers too. Hong (2012) concluded through empirical tests of 337 daily newspapers' online traffic data sets spanning from 2007-2010 that "newspapers' adoption of Twitter has a positive association with attracting online readership to their websites," although over time, the association between online readership and joining Twitter weakens (p.72). It is strongest at the beginning of an organization's entrance on Twitter (Hong, 2012). As print newspapers decline in popularity, news organizations are looking for new ways to encourage readership in new platforms while staying economically viable.

Although there is much positive potential for news organizations' use of Twitter to both publish breaking news and to drive traffic to their sites, the question remains: how are journalists able to represent complex issues through a truncated medium? Designed to capture attention as well as to inform quickly, how are story previews (depicted with a headline, image, caption, and story lead) representing complex issues?

## **2.2 Representation and News Coverage**

While not limited specifically to short Tweets, all coverage of immigration policy, in televised formats or full-length news stories, is working through representation of immigrants. Edward Said (1979) describes European's process of representing the Orient during colonialism by stating, "What is commonly circulated by it is not "truth" but representation" (p.29). The immigrant represented as the Other is useful for the present study to explore how immigrants are represented in news coverage.

Representation of the Orient, according to Said, works to simplify a group of people to distinguish one group from the other, historically dividing Europeans and Orientals during the colonialism era. This representation is problematic because it simplifies the complex (an entire culture) into something easier to interpret, such as a stereotype (Said, 1979). Stuart Hall (1997) builds off Said's analysis by pointing out that such stereotyping is problematic because it "symbolically fixes boundaries, and excludes everything which does not belong" (Hall, 1997, p. 258). Furthermore, "stereotyping tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power" (Hall, 1997, p. 258). These differences are naturalized and work to maintain power relations between the naturally superior group and the naturally inferior group, which is used to justify inhumane treatment and racism (Hall, 1997; Foucault, 2013).

Although it poses significant negative implications, a simplified representation is not necessarily intentional on behalf of an individual or the journalist writing a news story. All individuals make sense of the world through representation. In his overview of the constructionist theory of language, Stuart Hall (2013) explains "Representation is the production of meaning through language" (p.2). Representation takes place in three processes, the objects or people in the material world, the conceptual maps individuals use to organize the material world, and the language or signs used to share conceptual maps with others (Hall, 2013). Put another way, individuals construct an object in the material world through their individual conceptual maps and use systems of representation to organize the world into classifications and organizational patterns to

establish relationships, such as by color or similarity/difference (Hall, 2013). In the constructionist approach, meaning is not permanently fixed. It can appear fixed to maintain power relations, but it is socially constructed and shared culturally. Meaning can appear naturalized, but this is produced by cultures, sharing similar conceptual maps exchanged through common language (Hall, 2013). People share conceptual maps through language by the use of codes which attempt to “fix the relationships between concepts and signs” (Hall, 2013, pg. 7). Members of the same culture generally interpret codes the same way, but not always. When a sign or word is viewed, the corresponding concept is referenced, or vice versa, when a concept is referenced, the person uses a sign to express the concept (Hall, 2013). The fixing of codes can be problematic when it comes to representation. Said (1979) states that the representation of the Oriental juxtaposed to the European was used to legitimize the dominance and superiority of European colonialism as Europeans sought to exploit the resources of Oriental countries.

Relating the process of representation to TV production, Hall (1980) explores the interpretation of signs and concepts through codes in his landmark article, “Encoding/Decoding.” In his analysis of the communication between news producers and news consumers, Hall (1980) explains that news production happens within culture. Thus, the technical infrastructures, relations of production, and frameworks of knowledge shape how messages are selected for production and encoded to the audience through discourse (Hall, 1980; Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke, & Roberts,

1978). These messages have to be decoded by the audience to produce meaning. Audiences decode the messages transmitted in news stories, not always in the way intended by the news producers. There are different ways to “decode” the news, as explained by Hall (1980), including the dominant-hegemonic position in which messages are accepted the way news producers intended, the negotiated version in which a viewer may accept parts of the dominant message and reject others, and the oppositional code in which the viewer interprets the message outside the dominant framework and uses “some alternative framework of reference” (p. 173). Thus news organizations play an important role in disseminating culturally-encoded messages to audiences, although the messages received from news media do not necessarily directly correlate to what messages the audience accepts (Hall, 1980; (Hall et al., 1978). The news media help audiences organize concepts to make meaning out of them; organizing people, events, and issues into meaningful relationships.

### **2.2.1 Framing in the News Media**

Framing is a process that promotes a certain interpretation of an event, assisting in the organization of people, events, and issues that are represented through news coverage (Entman, 1993; Van Gorp, 2007). An important consideration of how online readers and Twitter audiences understand and respond to DACA rescindment is the framing applied to the coverage. Framing is the way news media present “the public not only with information on the event itself but also on how it should be interpreted” (Van

Gorp, 2007, p. 65). Frames create a narrative to support a certain interpretation and to help the audience understand an event (Entman, 2007). Frames are “part of culture,” and depend on the interaction between communicator, text, receiver, and culture (Van Gorp, 2007, p.63; Entman, 1993).

In his seminal essay applying framing to the communication field, Entman (1993) explains framing as a research paradigm to examine how “a communicated text exerts its power” (p. 56). Entman (1993) states,

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. (p. 52)

In Van Gorp’s (2007) cultural studies approach to framing, he outlines six premises to understand framing: 1) different frames can be applied to the same event to produce a different meaning; 2) the reading of text and frame are separate; 3) frames are culturally constructed rather than naturalized; 4) macrostructures influence frames; 5) frames are stable over time; and 6) frames are produced by the interaction between audience, media makers, text, and culture. Importantly to note, both from Entman’s seminal work and Van Gorp’s cultural studies approach, is that framing may not be intentional on behalf of the individual journalist to promote a biased interpretation, although it could be a conscious decision. In the context of immigration, the simplistic



or negative depiction of an immigrant is not necessarily attributed to an individual journalist's bias, but rather that "culture is the stock of commonly invoked frames" (Entman, 1993, p.53) and that social factors influence news representation (Hall, et al., 1978). That is to say, culture informs frames such as victim or criminal which are used across different topics and issues, including immigration (Van Gorp, 2007).

Framing needs to be understood as not always intentional on behalf of the journalist, although it can have consequences on the audience's understanding of an issue (Entman, 1993). Saliency used in framing makes "a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences" (Entman, 1993, p. 53). Highlighting certain aspects of an issue limits an audience's perception of the entire issue to the specific highlighted aspect, and missing frames can be just as significant as information used in the frame (Entman, 1993; Entman, 2007). On Twitter, there is a condensed space for news stories, so investigation of which aspects of the news stories are highlighted and the potential missing frames of the Tweeted news stories merits investigation.

Previous framing research has distinguished between generic and issue-specific frames (de Vreese, 2005; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). de Vreese (2005) describes that "certain frames are pertinent only to specific topics or events" which are issue-specific frames (p.54). Generic frames, by contrast, "transcend thematic limitations and can be identified in relation to different topics, some even over time and in different

cultural contexts” (de Vreese, 2005, p.54). Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) summarize five generic frames through an extensive literature review and extend them to their quantitative content analysis of Dutch news media, including 2,601 newspapers and 1,522 television news stories coded every other day from May 1-June 20, 1997. This selection criteria was chosen to include news stories covering the “Eurotop” meetings between European political leaders. The researchers developed a list of twenty yes-no questions designed to quantify the type of frame used in the news story; the generic frames included conflict, human interest, economic impact, responsibility, and morality (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). They found that “more sober and serious newspapers” and television programs used the attribution of responsibility and conflict frames more often than tabloid, sensationalized news outlets (p.93). Thus different types of media outlets may use frames differently (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

de Vreese (2005) defines framing as a process with three stages: “framing in the newsroom,” “frames in the news,” and “framing effects” (p.52) The structures of journalism, or “framing in the newsrooms,” contribute to the selection of news stories that may privilege certain stories, and certain highlighted content, over others (Gans, 1979a; deVreese, 2005, p.52). News stories are selected based on importance or interest which often center on informing the public about issues that will affect a large number of people or impact national interests (Gans, 1979a). Herbert Gans (1979b) explains that the values behind news stories are representative of society and the nation. Enduring values of the news include ethnocentrism, altruistic democracy,

responsible capitalism, small-town pastoralism, individualism, moderatism, order, and leadership, which represent the values and dominant ideology of American society (Gans, 1979b). These values carry over into news stories about immigration, which may disproportionately highlight aspects of immigration that fall within the values of news media and journalism structures that select important or interesting stories, like crime or legislative issues.

“Frames in the news” may be either issue-specific or generic and “framing effects” may have consequences on an individual’s attitudes or beliefs, or larger societal consequences that, as deVreese (2005) states, “may contribute to shaping social level processes such as political socialization, decision-making, and collective actions” (p.52). Given the functions of framing to define problems and causes of the problems, offer judgement, and generate solutions to the problems, the representation of immigrants in the news media warrants further attention considering the functions that framing has on influencing public opinion and public policy response to the problem (Entman, 1993; Kim et al., 2011).

### *Problems with Common Frames*

Although framing is a cultural process and is not necessarily intentional on behalf of the journalist, frames are problematic because they take a complex issue and simplify it. Because 78% of DACA recipients were born in Mexico (UCIS, 2014), DACA may be seen as a Mexican immigration issue. Thus, many of the following studies examine how

Mexican immigrants have been represented in newspapers. As frames are an invitation to interpret an event a certain way, they may limit the audience's understanding of the complex issues that ignore cultural, historical, social, and otherwise important contextual information important for understanding how a problem is defined, understood, judged, and acted upon (Entman, 1993; Van Gorp, 2007).

The first function of framing is to define the problem (Entman, 1993). Some of these problem definitions of illegal immigration may include social cost to the U.S., national security, safety of the illegal immigrant during border crossing, taking jobs away from Americans, or crimes (Kim, Carvalho, Davis & Mullins, 2011). As an example of why these problem definitions may be limiting, if an undocumented immigrant is defined as the problem because they are a 'criminal' for breaking U.S. laws, this invitation to interpretation (Van Gorp, 2007) "ignores the illegal acts of the employers" who may also be acting illegally by knowingly hiring undocumented immigrants and who also serve as part of the problem (Lakoff and Ferguson, 2006, "The Illegal Frame"). Additionally, if a frame of immigration is 'economics,' this defines the problem of immigration as only tied to economic concerns and ignores other reasons immigrants may be in the U.S., such as for family reunification or educational opportunities (Lakoff & Ferguson, 2006). Using a binary frame, like 'victim' or 'hero,' is too simplistic and reductive for the public to develop a more realistic and nuanced situation of immigration issues (Guerrero & Campo, 2012).

The second function of framing is to define the causes of the problem (Entman, 1993). Kim, Carvalho, Davis, and Mullins (2011) identified in their framing analysis of newspaper articles and television news over a ten-year period that solutions to the problem of illegal immigration are addressed more often in news stories than the causes of illegal immigration. This becomes problematic because effective solutions cannot be generated if the causes are not understood. In their analysis, examples of the causes of illegal immigration included economic problems in Latin America, a flawed U.S. immigration system, weak border control, or weak law enforcement (Kim, Carvalho, Davis & Mullins, 2011). Many frames shift blame to the individual immigrant rather than addressing the structural forces that may have led to immigration in the first place, such as globalization, labor markets, or environmental issues that have displaced people from their lands (Lakoff & Ferguson, 2006).

The third and fourth functions of framing offer a moral judgement and offer solutions to the problem (Entman, 1993; Van Gorp, 2007). Again, referencing the study by Kim's (2011) team of researchers, potential solutions to illegal immigration could include assisting the Latin American economy, increasing border control and law enforcement, or other solutions. Problematic solutions may arise if the frame limits understanding of the entire issue. As an example, potential solutions generated to an 'economic' problem may not take into consideration the educational and social reasons for being in the U.S. Representing immigrants as Others who are not U.S. citizens, may have implications for solutions generated to a problem that keeps immigrants as Others

as they were defined in the frame, rather than generating solutions to a pathway to citizenship. Immigrants as Others may not be recognized as included members of a society (Lakoff & Ferguson, 2006) in which they may have lived since childhood, as with DACA recipients. Impersonal tones used in news articles surrounding immigration issues are problematic because they provide limited context that “encourage[s] the mainstream U.S. audience to see Mexican immigrants as the others who have little in common with them” (Kinefuchi & Cruz, 2015, p. 346).

Not addressing all of the causes of immigration or framing it as a problem that stems from an individual has implications for how policy decisions are generated and supported by the public, such as public policy that could provide a permanent pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients. Examining how news media cover immigration policy may offer insight to how the public understands and supports certain policy based on what is covered and what is missing in news stories (Chavez & Hoewe, 2012).

### *Common Frames Representing Immigrants*

**Criminals.** Previous studies have identified ‘criminals’ as a frame in immigration news stories. A content analysis by Chavez, Whiteford and Hoewe (2010) examined the framing of Mexican immigration in news stories by four national newspapers, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *USA Today* over a one-year time period. In their analysis, crime was the most common topic of the stories. In a framing analysis identifying the definitions, causes, and solutions to illegal

immigration, Kim and a team of researchers used a systematic sample of 300 news articles from local and national newspapers and 50 TV transcripts from NBC, CBS, and ABC over 10-year sample period to focus on media depiction of illegal immigration from Mexico and Latin America (Kim et al., 2011). They identified crime as the most common explanation of why illegal immigration is a problem (Kim et al., 2011). They expected TV coverage more than newspapers to define crime as problem of illegal immigration, but differences were not statistically different; newspapers depict crime as a problem of illegal immigration, as well (Kim et al., 2011).

A later content analysis of three national newspapers' coverage of the passing of Arizona SB1070 in 2010, a controversial piece of legislation that requires legal residents to carry documentation papers with them or risk a misdemeanor or deportation ("Arizona's SB 1070," 2018), found that crime was one of six frames identified in the stories, although it was not the most common frame of the stories; public protest to the bill was the predominant frame (Chavez & Hoewe, 2012). In a comparative spatial-analysis of newspaper coverage of immigration issues between regional California media organizations close to the U.S.-Mexico border and those farther away, Branton and Dunaway (2009) classified newspapers by the volume of news stories about immigration, the negative aspects of immigration, and news stories that specifically highlighted illegal immigration. They found that newspapers closer to the U.S.-Mexico border contained more news stories about illegal immigration and more coverage of the negative aspects of immigration, many of which related to criminal concerns like drugs,

arrests, and human trafficking (Branton & Dunaway, 2009). Even international analysis has identified crime as a frame of immigration; Van Gorp's (2005) framing analysis of asylum-seekers in Belgian press coverage identified 'intruder' as a common theme among popular newspapers.

**Victims.** Contrary to the 'criminal' frame, the 'victim' frame may also be used to represent immigrants in American society. In their combined textual and visual analysis of Burmese refugee coverage in Indiana's *The Journal Gazette* over two decades, Ehmer and Kothari (2016) identified human interest as the predominant frame representing the problems facing refugees. These stories used adjectives to construct sympathy for Burmese refugees; however, the human interest framed declined over the two decades of analysis (Ehmer & Kothari, 2016). Although seemingly positive, news stories that construct sympathy for refugees or immigrants is problematic, as it still separates groups into 'us' and 'them' categories (Kinefuchi & Cruz, 2015).

Kinefuchi and Cruz's (2015) discourse analysis of online news articles relating to Mexican immigration found immigrant voices are often missing and many stories present an overly simplistic and reductionist view of immigration. Analyzing sixty online news stories from ABC, CBS, and NBC over a two-year time span, they identified five tones surrounding Mexican immigration: empathetic, sympathetic, informative, impersonal, and opposing. Most stories used an impersonal or sympathetic tone and presented immigration outside of its sociohistorical context. Many of the sympathetic



stories presented Mexican immigrants as victims of poverty and inadequate immigration policy.

Guerrero and Campo (2012) analyze the narrative frames of three national Mexican newspapers and their depiction of Mexicans in two parts: a general one-year time span and also surrounding two key issues, the passing of Arizona SB 1070 and the murder of 72 Central and South American migrants. Their analysis of how these issues were organized, defined, and explained, found that Mexican newspapers depict migrants in a binary framework as “victims of precarious migration to the United States” or heroes “who overcome adversities as they rightfully search for a better life” (p. 246).

**Economics.** In the previously mentioned content analysis of national newspapers, Chavez and Hoewe (2012) identified economics as one of six frames in news coverage of the passing of Arizona SB 1070. Economics was the second most common topic identified in the previous content analysis of four national newspapers by Chavez, Whiteford, and Hoewe (2010). Ehmer and Kothari (2016) identified that three-fourths of the stories using an economic frame referenced the social cost of supporting Burmese refugees in Indiana.

Roberts and Mahtani (2010) describe how immigrants were portrayed both positively and negatively in an economic context in their analysis of the discourse used to depict immigrants in a popular Canadian newspaper. Hardworking immigrants were positive for the Canadian economy, even if they were framed as outsiders and “not-

quite-Canadian” (Roberts & Mahtani, 2010, p.252). Roberts and Mahtani (2010) warn that “under this ideal, modalities of difference, such as race, no longer predetermine one’s success as each individual is evaluated solely in terms of his or her economic contribution to society” but the focus on even positive economic contributions can ignore the larger structures that complicate immigrants’ incorporation to society, such as not recognizing an immigrant’s degree earned overseas (Roberts and Mahtani, 2010, p.253). Lakoff and Ferguson (2006) state that even terms like “undocumented worker” or “temporary worker” used in immigration framing represent immigrants as workers, rather than members of society interested in educational and civic opportunities.

**Legislation/Policy.** Legislation is an important frame of immigration because the solutions proposed in newspapers’ framing of immigration can have implications on how an audience may conceptualize a solution through immigration policy. In their framing analysis to identify the definitions, causes, and solutions of illegal immigration as a problem, Kim, Carvalho, Davis, and Mullins (2011) found that immigration reform and tougher border control were cited as the most common solutions to the problem of illegal immigration. Legislation was identified as a topic in 28.1% of the newspaper articles analyzed by Chavez, Whiteford, and Hoewe (2010), and was the third most common topic after crime and economics.

News representation of immigrants may respond to and cover recent immigration policy. The previously mentioned content analysis by Chavez and Hoewe

(2012) examined newspaper coverage from *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *USA Today* surrounding the enactment of Arizona SB 1070 in 2010. They found that public protest to the bill was the most common frame of stories, with legislation as the second most common. The public protest frame represented opposition to the bill and represented Mexican immigrants as unfairly treated under the new legislation. However, the researchers note that there was a discrepancy between how the bill was represented by the news media and how the bill was supported by the public. In a poll, 57% of people thought SB 1070 was appropriate, while 23% said it went too far (Chavez & Hoewe, 2012). Thus the researchers conclude that news coverage “presented a distorted image of the public’s reaction to the law” (Chavez & Hoewe, 2012, p.199). Furthermore, the publication dates of the analyzed news stories are significant, as most stories were published after Arizona SB 1070 was signed into law. More opportunities for civic engagement and public protest could have arisen if stories had been published earlier (Chavez & Hoewe, 2012).

**Missing Frames.** Missing or uncommon frames identified in previous studies also offer insight into how the public may be understanding and potentially responding to immigration. Education was the least common topic of the nine identified by Chavez, Whiteford, and Hoewe (2010). Again, framing immigration in terms of crimes or economics ignores immigrants’ other motivations for residency, such as educational opportunities. Lakoff and Ferguson (2006) state that if immigration was framed as a civil rights problem, the problem could be understood as “symptomatic of broader

social and economic concerns” (p. 13). Ehmer and Kothari (2016) note that much visual coverage of Burmese refugees by an Indiana newspaper represented refugees as pupils or “child-like people who must be instructed how to live in the United States,” while few visuals represented refugees “teaching or leading others” (p.14) A missing frame of these visuals could be the leadership and positive impact of Burmese refugees on the local community (Ehmer & Kothari, 2016).

Much less common than sympathetic or impersonal tones, an empathetic tone was identified in just four out of sixty articles analyzed in Kinefuchi and Cruz’s (2015) critical discourse analysis of online newspapers. Empathetic representations of Mexican immigrants encourage readers to relate to the represented individuals, sharing their suffering or experiences to “[shed] preconceived notions about the social actors by highlighting alternatives to the preconceptions” (Kinefuchi and Cruz, 2015, p.339). Stories using the empathetic tone used Mexican immigrant voices to shape the construction of stories, and content in the articles focused on humanizing Mexican immigrants by centering immigration as a family issue. Additionally, they cite two examples of news stories that used an empathetic tone: one discussed the lives of three undocumented university students, and the other examined consequences for families and DREAMers when an immigration bill recently passed (Kinefuchi and Cruz, 2015). Kinefuchi and Cruz (2015) urge the news media to utilize an empathetic tone more often to “encourage more complex, contextualized understanding of Mexican immigration without falling into the trap of the stock American Dream narrative that brushes off

structural inequalities faced by the immigrants” (p.348). To conclude, these analyses have demonstrated that the Othering depiction of Mexican immigrants in news stories is problematic because it has implications for how the public understands and responds to immigration through personal attitudes and civic actions. Media framing not only influences public opinion but may also influence public policy (Chavez & Hoewe, 2012).

### 3 Methodology

Analysis took place in three stages in this study. The first stage examines which frames are used in full-length news articles. The second stage identifies and compares the frames used in Tweeted news stories to the full-length articles. The third stage examines the relationship between frame and audience interaction. Frames representing DACA rescindment may differ from the previously identified frames mentioned in the literature review above. Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) define the five generic frames as attribution of responsibility, conflict, human interest, economic consequences, and morality. In this study, inductive framing methods were used in combination with corpus linguistic methods to identify issue specific frames, which may also overlap with generic frames (such as economic or conflict frames) noted in other studies. Corpus linguistics methods tallied the most frequent recurring words to identify common topics. Touri and Koteyko (2015) describe that corpus linguistics can assist framing analysis by pointing analysts to keywords that “may help ‘diagnose’ and ‘nominate’ central ideas around which a frame is constructed” while empirically extracting the key words through software programs alleviates some of the subjectivity associated with inductive framing methods (p.5).

While a useful starting point, the count of most common words does not solely reconstruct the frames without more contextual analysis of how the words are used within each story (Baroiant, 2015). Corpus linguistics led into a constructionist approach

to framing analysis. Insight into how the problems, causes, judgements, and solutions to DACA are represented by news organizations requires interpretative framing analysis, where cultural knowledge from the researcher informs the reconstruction of possible frames (Van Gorp, 2007). Framing is a part of culture, and members of the same culture share similar schemata (Van Gorp, 2007; Entman, 1993). Frames rely on referencing the schemata of individual news consumers, and the frames reconstructed in this analysis are possible frames that may indicate how people are understanding the news.

Although not an audience analysis, the purpose of this framing analysis is to understand the possible frames that *may* influence possible public opinion, and thus public policy, on the DACA issue (Van Gorp, 2007; Entman, 1993; deVreese, 2005).

### **3.1 Methods**

#### ***Sample***

In this study, news articles covering DACA are examined from three elite national newspapers: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. The full-length online news stories selected for analysis were first located via Twitter. A Twitter-reach mapping company, Tweepmaps, was consulted to generate three query-searches corresponding to each newspaper's official Twitter account. The keyword "DACA" was searched in the time period August 22-September 19 from the three official Twitter accounts: @nytimes, @WSJ, and @washingtonpost. This four-week time period was selected because President Trump officially rescinded the DACA program September 5, 2017 so the analysis contains two weeks of news articles immediately

before and after the executive decision. Elite national newspapers are analyzed because their coverage influences content selected for publication in regional and local newspapers (Breed, 1955), and thus the tone surrounding immigration both nationally and locally (Chavez & Hoewe, 2012). The advanced-search queries generated by Tweepmaps resulted in a total of 125 total Tweets meeting the search criteria: 36 total Tweets by @nytimes, 14 Tweets by @WSJ, and 75 by @washingtonpost. Preliminary analysis narrowed the sample size to 113 Tweets (n=113); @nytimes (n=30), @WSJ (n=12), and @washingtonpost (n=71). Tweets were excluded from the current study if they did not link to a news article. Excluded Tweets included links to videos, live coverage/interviews, a podcast, a Snapchat story, or a PDF of Jeff Sessions's statement rescinding DACA. One Tweet by @washingtonpost displayed a graphic posted by @PostGraphics of the number of DREAMers who had enrolled in the program since its inception in 2012 but did not link to a news article, thus it was excluded from analysis. Although beyond the scope of the present study, news organizations used Twitter to display videos and news in other formats (such as Snapchat story videos, live coverage, and live interviews) to engage and inform the public about DACA rescindment and examining these types of Tweets would be worthwhile analysis for future studies.

### **3.1.1 Stages of Analysis**

***Stage 1: Full Online Articles.*** This analysis took place in three stages. First, news articles from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal* from the



date range of August 22-September 19 were analyzed in their full online versions. The total sample of Tweets (n=113) linked to 93 unique news articles. Some of the Tweets linked to the same news article. For example, a Tweet linking to *The Wall Street Journal* article, “Battle Shapes Up in Congress Over Fate of Immigration Program,” was published September 4, and appeared September 5 on Twitter. Each news organization did this; thus, the total number of uniquely-linked news articles in Tweets included: nineteen by *The New York Times* (n=19), eight by *The Wall Street Journal* (n=8), and sixty-six by *The Washington Post* (n=66) (see Table 1).

Table 1: Number and Percent of Tweets Linking to Unique Articles

	<i>New York Times</i>	<i>Wall Street Journal</i>	<i>Washington Post</i>
<b>Total Tweets*</b>	30	12	71
Number of Tweets that linked to an article already Tweeted (repeated articles Tweeted)**	11	4	5
Total unique articles	19	8	66
Percent of Tweets linking to unique article	63%	67%	93%

\*This number only corresponds to the number of Tweets linking to articles and excludes videos, podcasts, live interviews, etc....

\*\*Some Tweets published on different days or times linked to the same article published on a website

Table 2: Frequency of Keywords in Full-length Article Corpus

Top 11 Keywords:	Frequency
DACA	920
Trump	883
president	502
program	429
immigration	368
Congress	345
immigrants	340
people	316
decision	214
action	191
recipients	135

## Corpus Linguistics

News stories were first analyzed through corpus linguistics methods which led into a framing analysis. Corpus linguistics was used to analyze the collection of texts based on their lexical features, identifying the most frequent words. Keywords were identified by compiling the 93 articles into a corpus and running the full-text

corpus through Voyant-Tools to identify the most frequent words. A list of eleven keywords was compiled, including: DACA, Trump, president, program, immigration, Congress, immigrants, people, decision, action, recipients (*see Table 2*). This key list was a combination of the top 10 most frequent words of the corpus, excluding the words “said” and “mr” which were the third and fifth most frequent words respectively. These words were excluded based on their determination to not play a key role in the “aboutness” of the articles (Baroiant, 2015).

As all of these articles were found through a keyword search of DACA through these newspapers’ Twitter accounts, the “Links” function on Voyant-Tools was used to generate the collocates of “DACA” depicted in a network force directed graph to gather other important keywords pertaining to DACA that may not appear as frequently, but still play an important role in generating meaning in the articles. There was a total of six collocates in the “Links” graph; three of these collocates were also top-ten keywords,

including “Trump,” “program,” and “said” (which was excluded based on its non-essential meaning). Three of the remaining collocates of “DACA” were added to the keyword list, including “recipients,” “action,” and “decision.” The list of keywords were loosely grouped into five broad semantic categories that reflected the “aboutness” of the articles: Trump (president, executive, White House, administration), DACA (program, immigration, border, deferred, status), Congress (leaders, Republicans, Democrats, deal, act, legislation), immigrant (young, deport, dreamers, recipients, undocumented, illegal, children), and decision (end, announced, deal, months, time, Tuesday). These keywords and their placement in concordance lines in the articles may indicate where the frame resides in the article. Touri and Koteyko (2015) state that examining keywords in concordance lines provides a statistical method for examining where a frame could reside.

## **Frame Generation**

The keywords were underlined in each article and examined in their concordance lines within the full article, putting the keywords back into context to generate meaning (Touri & Koteyko, 2015; Mautner, 2016). Using Van Gorp’s (2010) approach to inductive framing analysis, open coding of the texts was the first step to analysis. The researcher read through the articles focusing on “how it is told” rather than what the article was about (Van Gorp, 2010). The researcher marked devices that reflected “selections the journalist [had] made,” through framing devices such as the actors and role of actors,

contrast of actors, lexical choices, appeals (emotional, ethical, and logical), metaphors, historical examples, relevant context, sources, actions and settings, lines of reasoning and causal connections, quantifications and statistics, depictions, and visuals that helped to construct the interpretation of the content of each article (Van Gorp, 2010). After open coding a sample of 25 articles, the researcher moved to axial coding, defined by Van Gorp (2010) as “look[ing] for patterns of devices by linking them to overarching ideas” (p.95) In open coding, a datasheet compiled the framing devices and the explicit or implicit reasoning devices that defined the problem, its causes, judgement, and potential solutions of each article. In axial coding, these devices were abstracted to compare differences and similarities across news stories to look for larger frames narrating the representation of DACA across individual articles and specific news organizations. Van Gorp (2010) suggests using information from a literature review to inform the axial coding phase. As such, the frames identified in previous studies on the representation of immigrants were used to abstract the framing and reasoning devices into cultural frames. A random sample of 25 articles were open-coded and axial-coded to reconstruct the frames used to cover DACA rescindment (*see Table 3*).

Table 3: Open Coding Excerpt

Source Text	Framing Devices	Reasoning Devices
<p>On <u>DACA</u>, <u>President Trump</u> Has No Easy Path</p>	<p><b>Metaphor:</b> "no easy path"</p>	
<p>For months, an anxious and uncertain <u>President Trump</u> was caught between opposing camps in the West Wing prodding him to either scrap or salvage an Obama-era <u>program</u> allowing undocumented <u>immigrants</u> brought to the country as minors to remain in the United States.</p>	<p><b>Depiction of Trump:</b> anxious, uncertain; <b>lexical choices:</b> caught between opposing camps; setting-West Wing and contrast of actors; <b>lexical choice:</b> "scrap or salvage" program; <b>description of immigrants-</b>allow them to remain here</p>	<p><b>Problem definition:</b> what to do about DACA, about the undocumented immigrants</p>
<p>Last week, with a key court deadline looming for Deferred <u>Action</u> for Childhood Arrivals, or <u>DACA</u>, Mr. <u>Trump</u>, exasperated, asked his aides for "a way out" of a dilemma he created by promising to roll back the <u>program</u> as a <u>presidential</u> candidate, according to two people familiar with the exchange.</p>	<p><b>Conflict of actors:</b> asked aides for "way out"; <b>lexical choices:</b> "looming" "exasperated" "dilemma he created"; sources familiar with exchange</p>	<p><b>Problem causes:</b> he made the fate of DACA a problem by promising to rescind it on the campaign trail; Trump's at fault</p>
<p>Mr. <u>Trump's</u> chief of staff, John F. Kelly, who had wrestled with crafting a compromise in his previous job as the <u>president's</u> homeland security secretary, began consulting with Republican lawmakers and staff members for a quick fix, according to three officials familiar with the situation.</p>	<p><b>Actors:</b> Trump administration, John Kelly and Republican lawmakers and staff members are conflicted; <b>lexical choices:</b> "wrestled" "craft a compromise" "quick fix"</p>	<p><b>Moral evaluation of problem:</b> this is a difficult decision for many people, including other Trump administration officials who are "wrestling" with it because the decision to end the program is wrong, implied through lexical choices representing struggle</p>
<p>He finally arrived at an inelegant solution to an intractable problem: Delaying a <u>decision</u> on the final fate of about 800,000 "Dreamers" covered by <u>President</u> Barack Obama's executive <u>action</u> for six months, and</p>	<p><b>Lexical choices:</b> "finally arrived" "inelegant solution" "intractable problem" "delay" decision; <b>depiction of immigrant:</b> "final fate"= helpless</p>	<p><b>Moral evaluation:</b> this is bad/unjust it's an "inelegant solution"; <b>Problem solution:</b> Congress and a legislative solution</p>

putting it on <u>Congress</u> to come up with a legislative solution to the problem.	immigrant, need to be "covered" by program; <b>lexical choice:</b> abdicating responsibility	
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## Construction of Frame Matrix

The last stage in Van Gorp's (2010) approach to inductive framing analysis is selective coding where the frame matrix is constructed. Rows represent the frame and columns the framing and reasoning devices that logically construct the frame. Van Gorp (2010) states that the goal of this stage is identifying the "cultural motive that can function as the core idea" to "express the central structuring idea in a frame package" (p.96-7). This analysis identified six frames: Partisan-Political Conflict, Executive Critique, Law & Order, Human Interest, Public Resistance, and Economic.

### *Frames Identified*

**Partisan-Political Conflict:** The Partisan-Political Conflict frame highlights disagreements among members of Congress as a problem in the DACA issue. The responsibility of this problem is attributed to Congress. Differences in ideological stances to immigration, such as tougher enforcement for Republicans and an option for a pathway to citizenship for Democrats, is the cause of the problem as they move forward on legislation. For example, the article, "Ryan and Pelosi to huddle on Dream Act to protect DACA recipients" highlights the challenges of bipartisan legislation to

honor both security enforcement and legislation that provides permanent relief to dreamers (O'Keefe, 2017).

**Executive Critique:** An article was defined to use the Executive Critique frame if the definition of the problem was President Trump himself. It is important to note that although many articles disapproved of the decision to end the DACA program, not all of these articles used the Executive Critique frame. In this frame, the problem definition is President Trump himself (not the end of the DACA program) and causes of President Trump as the problem included Trump's lack of strong ideological footing as a reason for his DACA decision, his desire to appeal to his hardline base by upholding campaign promises, and/or his own racism and bigotry toward non-whites. Articles using the Executive Critique frame often depicted President Trump as sending conflicting messages, contradicting himself and his administration in official statements and on Twitter, and lacking party loyalties. An example, "Trump Moves to End DACA and Calls on Congress to Act," President Trump is described as "a blame-adverse president" who wavered in the DACA decision, sending conflicting messages, and "appeared to have second thoughts" as shown in his Tweets (Shear & Davis, 2017). Some articles using this frame made reference to racial remarks made by President Trump on the campaign trail, as well as other racially-motivated hardline immigration policy of his, including the "botched" travel ban of predominantly Muslim countries enacted in January, 2017 (Shear & Davis, 2017).

**Law & Order:** The problem definition in the Law & Order frame centered on the legality and constitutionality of DACA. Articles either problematized the roots of DACA as executive overreach or the unconstitutional decision to rescind the program for DACA recipients. The article “Rescinding DACA is a test for the GOP” frames DACA as a problem that former President Obama created by overstepping Congress and supports Attorney General Jeff Sessions statement rescinding DACA. The author states, “Bringing DACA to an end is not an insider legislative tactic. Rather, it is a return to proper law enforcement” (Rogers, 2017). (This article also used the Partisan-Political Conflict frame to emphasize that Republicans need to take action in the next legislative steps of DACA). In an article supporting the DACA program, “Napolitano Sues Trump to Save DACA Program She Helped Create,” the *Law & Order* frame is used to argue that the rescindment of DACA violated the constitutional due process rights of recipients and guidelines of the Administrative Procedure Act (Shear, 2017).

**Human Interest:** The Human Interest frame used human examples to problematize the rescindment of DACA. Recipients’ personal testimony and stories shaped the construction of stories. Articles were emotive and used personal vignettes of DACA recipients and/or their families with the possible effect of building empathy, sympathy, compassion, anger, or relatability with the audience. These articles focused on the private or personal lives of DACA recipients (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). An example, “Battered by Harvey, Immigrants in Houston Brace for DACA Decision” centered on the story of a family of five Texan residents whose home was destroyed by



floods (Turkewitz, 2017). The eldest daughter, born in Mexico, used her DACA status to legally work three jobs, financially supporting her mother and three younger sisters. The article also mentions that after her father was deported to Mexico, she became the main provider to the family, saying she “felt free” after receiving DACA. The Human Interest stories problematized DACA as an issue that affects real people and real families.

**Public Resistance:** The Public Resistance frame contained articles emphasizing public figures’ negative reaction to DACA rescindment or the prospects of DACA rescindment. Public figures included leaders like Pope Francis, Rev. Samuel Rodriguez of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, business executives, American people, and DACA recipients themselves. These articles showed opposition to DACA from people outside of Congress and state or federal government, framing it as a societal issue where DACA recipients, as members of our community, face an uncertain future.

**Economic:** In the Economic frame, DACA is problematized because recipients are hard-working, white collar employers who positively contribute to the U.S. economy. Prominent actors in these articles include Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook, Tim Cook of Apple, and Brad Smith of Microsoft. An example article, “C.E.O. Tim Cook says he stands by Apple’s 250 DACA-status employees,” over 400 business executives sent an open-letter to the Trump administration over their concerns to terminate the program,

stating that “at least 72 percent of the top 25 Fortune 500 companies count DACA recipients among their employees” (Shaban, 2017). This article also overlapped with the Public Resistance frame. See Table 4 for the frame matrix and Tables 5 and 6 for the number of frames per full-length article and percentage of frames per full-length articles, respectively.

Table 4: Frame Matrix for the DACA issue.

Frame	Role/Depiction of Immigrant	Other Major Actors	Problem definition	Problem Causes	Responsibility/Moral Judgement	Possible solutions/actions	Moral and Emotional Base
<b>Partisan-Political Conflict</b>	Pawn in political game; used as "leverage" for other political issues (e.g. debt ceiling, border wall, etc....)	Congress: Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, Nancy Pelosi, Chuck Schumer, Senator Jeff Flake, Mitch McConnell, other leaders/members of Democratic or Republican Party	Legislation going forward on immigration policy and dealing with the future of DACA (hard, complex problem; no easy compromise).	Bipartisan cooperation and representing the interests of their districts as well as party affiliations/ideology.	Congress accepts responsibility to find a solution. Understood as a political problem; irresponsible of politicians to use Dreamers as leverage or jump into a hasty policy solution. Need to work for responsible and ethical solution.	Bipartisan legislation that addresses DACA recipients and represents party ideology on immigration (enhanced border security, interior security, limits on legal immigration, a pathway to citizenship, etc....)	Balance interests of helping sympathetic immigrants and supporting domestic-born Americans (base).
<b>Executive Critique</b>	Victims of a racist, cruel, unqualified administration. Pawns to appease base.	President Trump, Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Stephen Miller, other members of Trump Administration	Donald Trump as a person/president: represented as a villain, a fool, or otherwise incompetent for the job.	Trump as racist, incompetent and/or unqualified to be our president. Has to appease his electoral, hard-right base and follow through on campaign promises. Not representing interests of Republican party, jumping ship to receive positive press coverage.	Irresponsible, abdicating his duties to give real work to Congress. Racist for campaign trail remarks, travel ban, and now rescinding DACA.	Trump needs to make hard decisions for himself. Reflect popular public opinion over base's opinion Listen to advisers and stay loyal to one party. Stay consistent on important policy decisions.	Negative critique. Cruel in actions and hypocritical for giving Dreamers hope through Tweets and then ending program.

<b>Law and Order</b>	Sympathetic criminal violating the law; or a sympathetic victim violated by the law. Emphasizes legal standing of recipient: seeking green card status, citizenship, advance parole.	Jeff Sessions, Former President Obama, Texas and nine other attorney generals suing Trump administration. Judge Napolitano suing to protect recipients' rights.	The constitutionality and legal standing of DACA as a program, or questions on the legal standing of ending the program for recipients' legal rights.	President Obama overstepped his authority when he created the program in 2012, or President Trump's end of the program is unconstitutional by violating due process of recipients.	Need to uphold the law of the United States.	Uphold the U.S. Constitution and current laws. Encourage Congress to take charge with policy solution.	Session's testimony: "There is nothing compassionate about the failure to enforce federal immigration law."
<b>Human Interest</b>	Hard-working youth contributing to society, families, and civic life. Often presented as hero helping family, or victim affected by DACA rescindment.	DACA recipients and their families	People's lives will be uprooted. This is human problem; not just a legislative or legal issue.	Rescinding DACA program. No other option for former recipients.	Unfair, cruel, inhumane.	Extend DACA or pass permanent legislation quickly to keep opportunities for recipients in place.	Empathy/sympathy to help people who are just like 'us', regardless of citizenship status or race.
<b>Public Resistance<sup>2</sup></b>	Members of our community. DACA recipients actively protest decision; civically engaged in U.S. politics.	Pope Francis, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, university presidents, and other influential leaders protesting the decision publicly.	Members of our community face an uncertain future. Recipients face double threat of speaking out and facing arrest for civic actions.	End of DACA protections. Recipients no longer have protected status and could face deportation.	Unfair, unjust. Not in line with American values to expel talented immigrants.	Recipients need to keep speaking out. Renew DACA or pass permanent legislation to avoid deportations of community members.	These are members of our community. Protect them and give them peace of mind.
<b>Economic</b>	White-collar workers positively contributing to the economy.	Business executives (e.g. Mark Zuckerberg, Brad Smith).	Deporting DACA recipients will be costly to companies. The U.S. economy will take a hit.	Recipients can't work legally once work permits expire. Almost three-quarters of top 25 Fortune 500 companies employ DACA recipients.	Irresponsible, detrimental to economy. Counterproductive to desire to foster economic growth.	Keep DACA recipients here, no deportations. Renew DACA or pass permanent legislation.	Moral capitalism. Let recipients work, as they are bright and hard-working. Positively influence economy.

<sup>2</sup> *Public: any person protesting the decision that is not a government official or member of Congress.*

Table 5: Number of Frames per Full-length Articles

<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Partisan-Political Conflict</b>	<b>Executive Critique</b>	<b>Law-and-Order</b>	<b>Human Interest</b>	<b>Public Resistance</b>	<b>Economic</b>
<i>New York Times (n=19)</i>	4	12	2	4	5	2
<i>Wall Street Journal (n=8)</i>	6	2	2	0	2	1
<i>Washington Post (n=66)</i>	18	42	13	10	15	7
<b>Total (n=93)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>

Table 6: Percentage of Frames per Full-length Articles

\*Percentages calculated based on respective newspaper.

<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Partisan-Political Conflict</b>	<b>Executive Critique</b>	<b>Law-and-Order</b>	<b>Human Interest</b>	<b>Public Resistance</b>	<b>Economic</b>
<i>New York Times (n=19)</i>	21%	63%	11%	21%	26%	11%
<i>Wall Street Journal (n=8)</i>	75%	25%	25%	0%	25%	13%
<i>Washington Post (n=66)</i>	27%	64%	20%	15%	23%	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>11%</b>

**Stage 2: Twitter Repackaging.** The second stage of analysis examined the way the same news stories were repackaged and published on Twitter from the official newspaper Twitter accounts (@nytimes, @WSJ, and @washingtonpost). Previous studies have not examined news stories surrounding Mexican immigration on Twitter as a platform for news dissemination, although as previously noted, several studies have examined the topics and frames used in news organizations' tweets such as crime and public affairs as common topics (Armstrong & Gao, 2010) and technology and human interest as the most popular frames used by social media editors of news organizations (Wasike, 2013).

As Van Gorp (2005) states, the frame does not depend on the length a story. Twitter frames may be different or the same as those of the full-length news stories.

## *Tweet Frames*

### **Visuals of Tweets**

After frames were identified through inductive framing analysis of the full-length articles, framing analysis began on the Tweets. First, the content of each image was described, and then a frame was applied to only the visual image of the Tweet. For example, an image of President Trump was labeled *Executive Critique* because President Trump was the focus of the image. In contrast, a photograph of a smiling DACA recipient was labeled *Human Interest* because the image emphasized the human side of the DACA problem and invoked feelings of empathy and relatability. *Human Interest* was defined as an image centering on one person that invoked emotions of compassion, empathy, outrage, or relatability. Images of protesters and marches with signs were labeled as *Public Resistance* because they depicted groups of non-politicians resisting the decision to terminate the DACA program. Images could use more than one frame. For example, if the image contained only one individual with a sign, it was labeled *Human Interest* and *Public Resistance*. Images of politicians (e.g. Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer or Paul Ryan) were labeled as *Partisan-Political Conflict* because Congress and Representatives were the focus of the image. *Economic* images were those that featured prominent business leaders and/or contained their company logos in the

background (e.g. Apple logo). *Law-and-order* images included the Department of Justice sign, the Department of Homeland Security emblem, and judges (*see Table 7*).

Table 7: Frames of Tweet Images

	<b>Partisan-Political Conflict</b>	<b>Executive Critique</b>	<b>Law and Order</b>	<b>Human Interest</b>	<b>Public Resistance</b>	<b>Economic</b>
<b>Total Number (n=113)</b>	38	77	12	26	94	8
<b>Percent</b>	29%	59%	9%	20%	72%	6%

### **Textual plus Visual Analysis of Tweets**

After the preliminary visual analysis, the textual components of the Tweet were included in the analysis. Each Tweet contained a Tweeted message above the image, and most Tweets also included a Tweeted headline and byline beneath the image to preview the news story published on the news website. Taking these textual components into account along with the accompanying visuals, an open coding spreadsheet was created to note the same framing devices that were identified in the analysis of full-length articles: actors, lexical choices, and lines of reasoning to reconstruct the frame package. Next, coding analysis combined the framing devices listed from the textual components of the Tweets along with the visuals to reconstruct the frame of the Tweeted story. The same six frames were used in the Tweet analysis: partisan-political conflict, executive critique, human interest, public resistance, law and order, and economics. Like the full-length articles, Tweets could be assigned more than one frame (*see Tables 8 and 9*).

Table 8: Number of Tweeted Articles per Frame by Publisher

	<b>Partisan Conflict</b>	<b>Executive Critique</b>	<b>Law and Order</b>	<b>Human Interest</b>	<b>Public Resistance</b>	<b>Economic</b>
<b>New York Times (n=30)</b>	6	16	4	8	15	2
<b>Wall Street Journal (n=12)</b>	7	4	1	2	8	2
<b>Washington Post (n=71)</b>	15	46	9	6	25	6
<b>Total (n=113)</b>	28	66	14	16	48	10

Table 9: Percent of Tweeted Articles by Frame by Publisher

\*Percentages calculated based on the respective newspaper

	<b>Partisan Conflict</b>	<b>Executive Critique</b>	<b>Law and Order</b>	<b>Human Interest</b>	<b>Public Resistance</b>	<b>Economic</b>
<b>New York Times (n=30)</b>	20%	53%	13%	27%	50%	7%
<b>Wall Street Journal (n=12)</b>	58%	33%	8%	17%	67%	17%
<b>Washington Post (n=71)</b>	21%	65%	13%	8%	35%	8%
<b>Total (n=113)</b>	25%	58%	12%	14%	42%	9%

To help establish coder reliability, twenty other coders participated in coding the sample Tweets. Each Tweet was labeled with a frame by six other people besides the researcher. The researcher's first-year writing course which is predominantly composed of college freshmen at a STEM university participated in coding. The Tweets were separated into five distinct interval sub-sections (n=113) and each sub-section was coded by 3-4 students who coded approximately 25 Tweets each.<sup>3</sup> Three complete

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<sup>3</sup> The sample of 113 Tweets was divided into five sub-sections: #1-25, 26-50, 51-75, 76-100, and 101-125. Groups of 3-4 student received one sub-section of Tweets (e.g. Group 1 received Tweets #1-25, Group 2 received Tweets #26-50, etc...). These results were compiled into a complete coded set to assemble coded responses #1-125. Some Tweets were omitted from



sample sets were generated from this class coding (labeled as Coded Sets 1, 2, and 3 on Table 9).<sup>4</sup> Three other coders were also recruited to code the complete sample of 113 Tweets (labeled as Coder 1, 2, and 3 on Table 10). Each coder received training on framing analysis, an explanation of the six frames, and was asked to circle the frame(s) that identified the Tweeted news story, considering the text and image. These coded responses were used to measure intercoder reliability against the researcher's Tweeted frame results shown in Table 8. A p-value score was generated using MedCalc, an online statistical analysis software. A 95% confidence interval was tested. A p-value above 0.05 indicates no statistically significant difference between an intercoder's results and the researcher's results. A p-value below 0.05 indicates a statistically significant difference between an intercoder's results and those of the researcher (see Table 10). These results will be further discussed in the Findings and Discussion sections.

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analysis because they linked to a video or live interview, thus, the total sample of size was n=113 Tweets even though the Tweets received a numerical code up to 125.

<sup>4</sup> Some coded sub-sample sets were not included in inter-coder analysis because there was an odd number (e.g. only Tweets #25-75 were coded because group members did not turn in their responses) so only three complete coded sets were generated from the class coding.

Table 10: Intercoder Results: Percent of Tweeted Article Frames and p-values

\*p-values below 0.05 indicate a statistical difference between coder and researcher<sup>5</sup>

\*\*Average percent rounded to nearest whole number.

	<b>Partisan-Political Conflict</b>	<b>Executive Critique</b>	<b>Law-and-Order</b>	<b>Human Interest</b>	<b>Public Resistance</b>	<b>Economic</b>
<b>Class Coding Compilation 1 (n=113)</b>	25% P = 1.0000	48% P = 0.1329	12% P = 1.0000	19% P = 0.3124	32% P = 0.1203	5% P = 0.2397
<b>Class Coding Compilation 2 (n=113)</b>	28% P = 0.6102	49% P = 0.1760	8% P = 0.3173	36% P = 0.0001*	34% P = 0.2164	6% P = 0.3930
<b>Class Coding Compilation 3 (n=107)<sup>6</sup></b>	26% P = 0.8652	54% P = 0.5511	11% P = 0.8167	29% P = 0.0067*	28% P = 0.0301*	5% P = 0.2479
<b>Coder 1 (n=113)</b>	35% P = 0.1017	37% P = 0.0016*	27% P = 0.0045*	14% P = 1.0000	19% P = 0.0002*	8% P = 0.7880
<b>Coder 2 (n=113)</b>	44% P = 0.0027*	75% P = 0.0069*	24% P = 0.0191*	21% P = 0.1671	39% P = 0.6467	13% P = 0.3377
<b>Coder 3 (n=113)</b>	39% P = 0.0244*	50% P = 0.2286	8% P = 0.3173	26% P = 0.0244*	27% P = 0.0180*	11% P = 0.6171
<b>Average Percent**</b>	33%	52%	15%	24%	29%	8%

<sup>5</sup> P-values were calculated using frame percentages through MEDCALC® an online statistical software. (MedCalc Software, 2018)

<sup>6</sup> One coded sub-sample of Tweets (#25-50) had several Tweets unlabeled with a frame. The student skipped identifying some of the Tweets with a frame for reasons unknown, thus the sample size is lower for this set. Percent is calculated using the respective sample size (n=107).

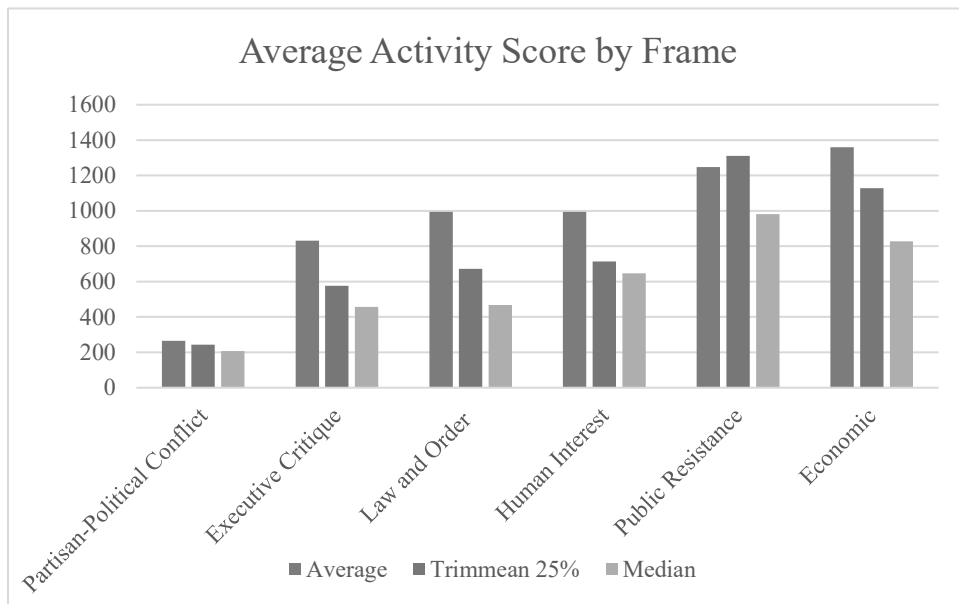
**Stage 3: Audience Interaction.** The third and final stage of analysis investigated the audience interaction of the Tweeted news stories. Audience interaction was measured through a quantitative count of the number of replies, retweets, and likes on a Tweeted news story. First, each Tweet was given an Activity Score. The Activity Score is a sum of the number of replies, retweets, and likes for each posted Tweet.<sup>7</sup> The Activity Scores for each Tweet were organized by frame and averaged<sup>8</sup>. The trimmean was also calculated to eliminate outliers in the average Activity Score per frame. The trimmean eliminates 25% of the data points that fall at the far ends of the bell curve, calculating the average for the middle 75% of the data points. The trimmean was calculated because the researcher identified that one Tweet using the Economic frame had 783 replies, while the Tweet with the second highest amount of replies using the Economic frame had only 186 replies. By eliminating outliers, it can be determined if the overall activity level is still high for a frame category across the other Tweets within the 75% of the bell curve. The median activity level for each frame was also calculated to provide an additional measure of activity per frame. This Activity Score shows the average audience interaction on a Tweet by the frame (*see Figure 1*).

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<sup>7</sup> For example, a Tweet with 31 replies, 102 retweets, and 186 likes had an “Activity Score” of 319 (31+102+186=319).

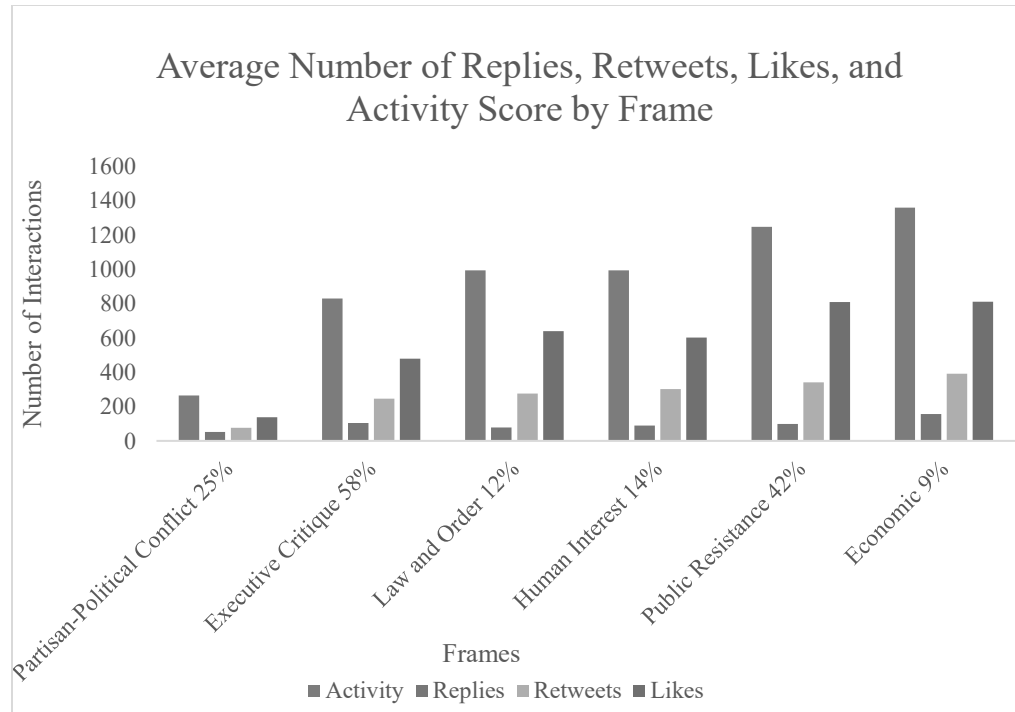
<sup>8</sup> For example, fourteen Tweets used a Law and Order frame. The total Activity Score was averaged for the Law and Order frame by adding each Law and Order Tweet’s Activity Score and dividing by the number of Tweets using that frame (fourteen in this case).

Figure 1: Activity score for each Tweet, calculated by summing number of replies, retweets, and favorites.



The number of replies, retweets, and likes was averaged among frames, as well (see Figure 2). For example, the number of replies for all Tweets using the Human Interest frame was averaged to represent the average amount of replies that a Tweet using a Human Interest frame received. If a Tweet used more than one frame, for example Public Resistance and Economic, the average number of replies, retweets, and likes was averaged in both frames. More analysis of the significance of audience interaction by frame (as well as analysis of the major outlier Tweet with 763 comments using the Economic frame) will follow in the Findings and Discussion sections.

Figure 2 : Average number of replies, retweets, and likes on DACA Tweets by Frame.



## **4 Findings**

This analysis took place in three stages. Corpus linguistic methods and inductive framing analysis helped identify the frames used in full-length articles on DACA rescindment. The same frames were applied to code Tweeted news stories. The researcher sought to identify any differences between frames in full-length news articles and Tweeted news stories. The last step of analysis was audience interaction with Tweets to analyze the relation between the numbers of replies, retweets, and likes per frame.

### **Stage 1: Frames in Full Articles**

The most popularly used frame in the full articles was the Executive Critique frame (60%). As far as the researcher is aware, previous framing analyses have not separated a Political frame into the two branches of government by identifying an Executive Critique and Partisan-Political Conflict frame as done in this study. However, through the inductive analysis, a distinctive problem definition emerged between the actions of President Trump and those of Congress. As President Trump has publicly spoken against the biased liberal-leaning mainstream media, it is possible that news organizations have responded to his criticism through criticism of their own. However, as this is a new frame not previously identified in the literature as known by the researcher, more investigation should be done to identify an Executive Critique frame across news media and topics, as well as the implications of this frame on possible public opinion and

policy. The second most common frame used in full-length articles was the Partisan-Political frame (30%). It is likely that the time period of analysis, two weeks before and two weeks after President Trump made his decision on the DACA program, impacted the political emphasis of these news articles and Tweets. The least common frame identified was the Economic frame (11%) and Human Interest (15%) was the second least common frame used in the full-length articles on DACA rescindment.

## **Stage 2: Repackaging on Twitter**

The Executive Critique frame was also the most common frame used in Tweeted news stories. The researcher identified 58% of the Tweets to use an Executive Critique frame. The Executive Critique was the most commonly identified frame across all six inter-coder sets (ranging from 37%-75% of the Tweets). The average percent across inter-coders for the Executive Critique frame was 52%. The second most common Tweeted frame as identified by the researcher was the Public Resistance frame (42%). The increased presence of the Public Resistance frame was the only statistically significant difference between frames used in full articles and those used in Tweets (the researcher identified a Public Resistance frame in 24% of the articles and 42% of the Tweeted articles). However, intercoder reliability does not support a statistically significant difference between the presences of the Public Resistance frame in full-length news articles versus the Tweeted versions. Three of the six inter-coder results generated a p-value below 0.05, indicating a significant difference between the

researcher’s coded identification of the Public Resistance frame and the other coders’ identification of the Public Resistance frame (*see Table 10*). The average percent of Public Resistance frames was 29% across the six inter-coder sets. When compared to the percentage of full articles using the Public Resistance frame (24%), the average percent of Tweeted news stories using a Public Resistance frame (29%) generated a p-value of 0.4209 which is not statistically significant (*see Table 11*). Further analysis is necessary to determine if Tweeted articles used the Public Resistance frame more often than full-length online news articles, and more investigation into frames on Twitter news stories is recommended.

Table 11: Percent of Frames used in Full-length Articles and Tweets  
 \*p-values less than 0.05 indicate a statically significant difference.

	<b>Partisan-Political Conflict</b>	<b>Executive Critique</b>	<b>Law-and-Order</b>	<b>Human Interest</b>	<b>Public Resistance*</b>	<b>Economic</b>
<b>Articles (n=93)</b>	30%	60%	18%	15%	24%	11%
<b>Tweets identified by researcher (n=113)</b>	25%	58%	12%	14%	42%	9%
<b>p-value from researchers results<sup>9</sup></b>	P = 0.4237	P = 0.7721	P = 0.2274	P = 0.8394	P = 0.0067*	P = 0.6333
<b>Inter-coder Averages</b>	33%	52%	15%	24%	29%	8%
<b>p-value from intercoder results<sup>10</sup></b>	P = 0.6458	P = 0.2513	P = 0.5633	P = 0.0720	P = 0.4209	P = 0.7978

<sup>9</sup> Calculated by comparing the percentages of the Tweeted frames as identified by the researcher to the percentages of the frames of the full length articles.

<sup>10</sup> Calculated by comparing the inter-coder average percentages (see Table 9) to the percentages of the full length articles.



## ***Visual Frames***

Turning to the visual images of the Tweets, the second most common visual frame used in the Tweets was also Executive Critique. This is likely because President Trump's administration made a major decision rescinding the program and news organizations responded by posting visuals of President Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions who announced the decision. However, the most commonly used frame in the Tweet visuals was the Public Resistance frame which showed actors other than politicians or government employees speaking out against DACA rescindment or advocating for the program to continue. Members of the American public and/or DACA recipients involved in marches and protests accompanied almost a quarter of the Tweeted visuals (72%).

Some of the Tweeted images were published multiple times. Some Tweeted news articles were published more than once on Twitter, sometimes on different days or even within the same day.<sup>11</sup> Sometimes these Tweeted stories used the same image in the second posting, and sometime the images differed. For example, *The Washington Post* article, "Congressman: John Kelly is a 'disgrace to the uniform' and should resign over DACA decision" was published twice on Twitter, on September 6 and 7 using the same image of President Trump and John Kelly sitting and talking. However, *The New York Times* posted four Tweets linking to the same news article, "Trump Moves to End DACA

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<sup>11</sup> Although beyond the scope of this research project, more investigation into why news organizations choose to publish the same story on Twitter multiple times is recommended for further research.

and Calls on Congress to Act.” Each of these four Tweets featured a different image, including a photo of Jeff Sessions, two NYT Facebook commentators’ quotes, and a quote from Jeff Sessions.

Conversely, some Tweeted stories used the same image in their Tweet posting but linked to a different news article. The same image of President Trump at a microphone is published linking to two different articles published by *The Washington Post* from two different sections; “What Trump is doing with DACA and trade could backfire badly” was published in the Wonkblog Analysis section and “The Trump administration’s claim that DACA ‘helped spur’ the 2014 surge of minors crossing the border” was published as a FactChecker Analysis article. About 23% of the visuals of Tweeted news stories in this study were published in more than one Tweet.

The selection of visuals, and their repetition, may be explained by the platform that publishes full-length news articles on Twitter. The Twitter mapping company consulted for this study, Tweepmaps, stated that all three news organizations used TweetDecks to publish their Tweeted news stories about DACA. The Tweepmaps CEO explained that using the TweetDecks platform, “a website owner ads some markup to the page so that twitter ads [*sic*] the info (summary text + possibly a photo). The way this works, twitter has a bot that goes to the link being tweeted and fetches the image” (Tweepsupport, personal communication, 2018). The Tweeted news article summary and image are

generated automatically from the website mark-up (Tweepsupport, personal communication, 2018).

Additionally, from this study it is unclear how certain news articles are first selected for publication on Twitter, as not every news article from these organizations is published through their official Twitter account. When contacted, the Senior Publicist for *The Washington Post* stated that they were not able to assist in answering questions about which articles are selected for publication on Twitter (Miranda, personal communication, February 15, 2018).

### **Stage 3: Audience Interaction**

Likes were the most common form of interaction with a news story on Twitter, followed by retweets. Replies were the least common form of audience interaction with a Tweeted news story (see *Figure 2*). The Economic frame had the highest average Activity Score (1360) across the frames even though it was used the least (9%). The Economic frame was the only frame where the p-value was greater than 0.05 indicating that the researcher's identification of the Economic frame was not statistically different than any of the other six-coders' identification of the Economic frame (see Table 10). Even when eliminating the outlier Tweet that had 783 comments, the trimmean score shows that the Economic frame still had the second highest Activity Score across the six frames, following the Public Resistance frame. The Public Resistance frame had the second highest average Activity Score (1248) after the Economic frame. The Executive

Critique frame which was most commonly used (58%) had the second lowest average Activity Score across frames (831). The Partisan-Political frame which was the third most commonly identified Tweeted frame identified by the researcher and the second most commonly identified frame by the six inter-coders had the lowest average Activity Score across all frames (265).

## 5 Discussion

### Executive Critique

As stated earlier, frames are problematic because they take a complex issue and simplify it into something easier to interpret (Van Gorp, 2007; Entman, 1993). While President Trump did make the decision to terminate the DACA program after five years of its successful implementation, the *Executive Critique* frame may inhibit complex understanding of immigration policy. President Trump has made controversial and racist remarks both on the campaign trail and in office that raise concern over his stance towards those with Mexican heritage; however, his leadership is not the only problem cause of DACA rescindment. DACA policy is a complex problem that did not start and will not end with President Trump's term in office. President Obama created the DACA program in 2012 through executive action after Congress failed to pass the DREAM Act creating a permanent pathway to citizenship for undocumented youth who arrived in this country as minors. Furthermore, the last comprehensive immigration policy in the U.S. was passed in 1986 (Varsanyi, 2008). In the past three decades since federal policy change, individual states have taken diverse stances in response to growing numbers of undocumented immigrants, (e.g. through more stringent measures such as Arizona's passage of the controversial SB1070, some cities providing protections as Sanctuary cities, or permitting undocumented youth to pay in-state tuition) (Chavez & Hoewe, 2012; "Undocumented Student Tuition," 2015). Although President Trump acts as a convenient scapegoat, identifying him as the sole problem with DACA

rescindment presents an overly simplified and reductive understanding of U.S. immigration policy. Using other frames that address underlying causes of increasing undocumented immigration, such as families leaving because of economic factors or violent gang activity, may be more beneficial to enacting bipartisan legislation.

## **Economics**

Although the Economic frame was only used in 11% of full-length articles and 9% of Tweets, it received the most audience interaction as calculated from the Average Activity score<sup>12</sup>. This means that although not many Economic framed articles are published, they receive a lot of audience attention and interaction. Part of this may be due to celebrity business executives coming out in support of DACA protections. Five of the Economic frame articles and six of the Economic frame Tweets featured a prominent business executive speaking out in favor of keeping DACA recipients in the U.S. and touting the positive contributions they bring to their companies and the U.S. economy. While it is a positive sign that employers are standing up for valued workers, this does raise questions. Who will speak up for the positive economic contributions of the more numerous and less educated immigrants if they are faced with deportation? Undocumented immigrants make up a large portion of the construction, agriculture, food, and hospitality industries in the United States (Krogstad, Passel, & Cohn, 2017).

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<sup>12</sup> The average percent of Economic frames identified by the other coders was 8%.

Their economic contributions are important although are not commonly recognized. An analysis by Hanson (2007) to the Council on Foreign Relations compares undocumented labor to temporary legal work-visas, concluding that “there is little evidence that legal immigration is economically preferable to illegal immigration” because undocumented labor is mobile, flexible, and quick to respond to market trends (p.5).

As noted in one editorial article published by *The New York Times*, when immigration is solely understood in terms of economic consequences, the human side is diminished because “people--not workers-- will be deported. Lives-- not careers-- will be shattered” (Gessen, 2017). Another editorial published by *The Washington Post* highlighted that DACA, “has the unintended effect of juxtaposing these ‘good,’ ‘deserving’ immigrants with the ‘bad’ ones — those with, say, a drug charge from years back — who deserve nothing but deportation and marginalization” (Sati, 2017). As Congress continues to debate immigration reform, it is important that the American public also understands the positive economic contributions of immigrants who do not have public advocates like Mark Zuckerberg or Brad Smith fighting for their legal protections.

Returning to the outlier Economic Tweet, this Tweet posted by @washingtonpost generated 783 replies. The Tweet with the next highest number of replies was 490. Why did this Tweet receive almost 300 more replies than any other

Tweet in this sample?<sup>13</sup> This Tweet's image is of Americans protesting with pro-immigration signs, holding an American flag. The message above the Tweet reads: "Trump surrogates say ending DACA could be good for U.S. workers" and it linked to *The Washington Post* article, "Trump is expected to phase out DACA program, although decision is not finalized." A comment analysis is beyond the scope of this research project but perhaps this Tweet generated so much commentary because of its controversial claim that undocumented labor is harmful to American workers. As partial justification for terminating the DACA program, Attorney General Jeff Sessions cited the unfair consequences of the program as it "denied jobs to hundreds of thousands of Americans by allowing those same jobs to go to illegal aliens" (Sessions, 2017). Americans need more nuanced understanding of the economic impacts of undocumented labor on the U.S. economy as popular political sentiment pits American workers against foreign-born workers.

### **The Humans and Their Dreams**

As noted in previous studies, news frames can generate feelings of sympathy for immigrants or elicit other emotional reactions to provide a "human face" to immigration problems (Kinefuchi & Cruz, 2015; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Ehmer & Kothari, 2016;

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<sup>13</sup> Although beyond the scope of this research project, an analysis of the comments below the story would be insightful to understand why this Tweet received more comment engagement than any other Tweet in this sample by almost 300 replies.



Guerrero & Campo, 2012). In the DACA coverage studied here, 15% of articles used a Human Interest frame while 14% of Tweets employed a Human Interest frame<sup>14</sup>. Kinefuchi and Cruz (2015) recommend that journalists use empathetic tones and that immigrants' voices should shape the construction of news articles about immigration. Likewise, Human Interest frames describe the impact of policy on the lives of real DACA recipients and their families which may encourage the American public to understand policy as more than distant laws enacted in Washington, but also as laws that will positively benefit their neighbors, many of whom already identify as Americans. Human Interest frames present DACA and immigration policy as a social justice issue that affects families and individuals searching for a better life.

Different from previous media studies on the representation of immigrants, this study did not identify the Criminal frame as a frame used in DACA coverage. By definition, DACA recipients cannot have been "convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, or three or more other misdemeanors, [or]... otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety," to receive DACA status according to the United States Customs and Immigration Services ("Consideration of DACA," 2017). By contrast, immigrants were much more likely to be represented as hard-working, productive members of their communities, and in the words of former President Obama, as "Americans in their heart, in their minds, in every single way but one: on paper"

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<sup>14</sup> The average percent of Human Interest frames identified by the other coders was 24%.

(Obama, 2012). Representation of DACA recipients across these six frames did share similarities with the Victim Frame analyzed in previous studies (Guerrero & Campo, 2012; Ehmer & Kothari, 2016). As noted in Ehmer and Kothari's (2016) study of how Burmese refugees here represented in an Indiana newspaper, immigrants should not solely be presented as "child-like people who must be instructed how to live in the United States" (p.14) Many of the articles passively constructed DACA recipients as "people brought here as children through no fault of their own." This construction poses two problems to understanding immigration as a complex, social justice issue. Firstly, while absolving children from the responsibility of their parents' criminal actions, it implicitly places blame on the parents, presenting them as the criminals. The majority of news articles did not describe why children were brought here illegally. This is consistent with Kim and her team of researcher's (2011) findings that solutions to undocumented immigration are addressed more often than the causes of it in news articles. Of the 93 articles in this analysis, four directly quoted the parents of DACA recipients while none of the 113 Tweets directly quoted the parents of DACA recipients in the news story previews. This parental population of undocumented workers is still silenced and implicitly labeled as the criminal population responsible for the DACA situation.

Human Interest frames are constructed on Twitter differently than in full-length articles. In full articles, immigrant voices can construct the shape of the story and an article may take a narrative structure, engaging readers' emotions through highs and

lows of the story. Twitter, in its truncated platform, cannot provide as much space and elaboration of immigrant voices to construct a story, however, images posted on Twitter pose a strong potential to elicit emotional responses and generate empathy. In one Tweet by @washingtonpost, a young, smiling Asian male is the center of the Tweeted image whose caption reads, "How American's fastest growing immigrant population is left out of the debate." This Tweeted story presents the difficulties facing undocumented Asian immigrants not as an unnamed group living in the shadows of American society but describes the struggle and ambitions of one young Asian immigrant reaching out to share his story and his hopes of becoming documented. The story becomes personalized through the image of the one undocumented immigrant. Another Human Interest Tweet showed a family of five sitting outside, sitting near and hugging one another. The Tweeted message describes the family: "After Hurricane Harvey hit, families in Houston brace for DACA decision." This image presents DACA not as an abstract policy in Washington, but as a decision that affects a real family already impacted by a natural disaster.

## 6 Conclusion

This study sought to understand the frames used to cover DACA rescindment by three national news organizations because this coverage has implications on public understanding of the DACA program, and ultimately, its future as a public policy. President Trump's six-month phase-out of DACA presented the opportunity for lawmakers to finally address and pass a permanent piece of legislation codifying DACA protections into law or advancing other immigration law (like enhanced border enforcement). One goal of this study was to identify the frames used in the full-length news articles and any differences in the frames of Tweeted versions of those news articles. Analyzing how a complex issue like DACA rescindment is covered in condensed news stories on Twitter merited investigation, especially as Americans increasingly receive at least a portion of their news on social media platforms (Shearer & Gottfried, 2017; Barthel & Shearer, 2015), which truncate news.

To answer these questions, corpus linguistics methods were first used to generate a frequency count of keywords in the full-length articles. Although not used in this study, using a reference corpus is recommended for future studies combining corpus linguistics and framing analysis together (Touri & Koteyko, 2015). Comparing the keywords from a specialized corpus and a reference corpus show which words are occurring more frequently in the specialized corpus than the reference corpus, which may provide a statistical measure of where the frame is located when these keywords are placed back

in concordance lines (Baker 2006; Touri & Koteyko, 2015). A reference corpus was not used in this study because of limited resources, but is recommended for future studies using corpus linguistics and framing analysis.

The other methodology, inductive framing analysis, closely followed Van Gorp's method of framing analysis and was effective in reconstructing the frames used in full-length articles displayed in the frame matrix. Inductive framing analysis of the Tweeted news stories proved more challenging because there was less text to analyze. Future framing analyses of Tweeted news stories need to concentrate attention on the visuals of Tweets. An open coding and axial coding phase could note framing devices specific to the visual, such as actors in the image, camera angles, editing filters, lighting, depth of field, areas of (un)focus, and setting. The frame matrix could be constructed in a way to emphasize the visual framing devices rather than the textual framing devices because the visual takes up a larger portion of the Tweeted news story than the textual components. Additionally, some type of coding process should account for Tweeted news stories whose textual and visual elements do not align. As an example from this study, one Tweet published included a picture of a public march, which was coded as a Public Resistance visual. The same Tweet's textual components (message above the visual and headline and byline below the visual) discussed Wall Street's desire for a tax rewrite, which was coded as an Economic frame. In this study, the researcher coded the visual frame first, coded the whole Tweet (both the textual and visual elements) frame, and then looked for discrepancies between solely the frame of the visual and the frame

of combined textual and visual elements. Future researchers may want to code Tweeted news stories for a dominant visual frame and secondary-textual frame. In whatever way a coding system is developed, future Tweeted news story analyses should investigate how the Tweeted image is supporting or not supporting the textual components of the Tweet, and how the textual components are anchoring or relaying meaning (Barthes, 1964).

This study's other research question sought to understand the relation between audience engagement and the frame used in Tweeted news stories. The goal was to understand which type of frame was receiving the most Likes, Retweets, and Replies to begin to understand how the public was responding to DACA rescindment. The researcher did not follow a prescribed method, but created an Activity Score where the number of Likes, Replies, and Retweets were averaged and organized by frame. While interesting, this measure does not help answer deeper questions about the audience's understanding or reaction to DACA rescindment. A Like or Retweet does not answer how, or to what degree, the audience is supporting or protesting the decision. From viewing these Tweeted news stories, what actions will the audience take going forward in response to DACA rescindment? How did the frames of Tweeted news stories actually impact public opinion and the public's support of future policy? Which frames are generating the most public outcry? Which frames could be most productive in passing public policy? These larger questions were not, and could not, be answered with framing analysis methods and were beyond the scope of this study. However,

future researchers could use corpus linguistics methods to analyze how audiences on Twitter are responding to news topics through a comment analysis because corpus linguistics methods work well for large sample sizes (Mautner, 2016).

### **Humans and Other Dreams**

While taking place on new media platforms, the stakes of analyzing news coverage of DACA rescindment are greater than the number of Likes or Retweets or even the frequency of frames used; the significance is the representation of DACA recipients and other undocumented immigrants who are may be seen as the Other in American society. Stuart Hall (1997) explains that differences between people and cultures are represented as stereotypes. Stereotypes work by reducing complex characteristics into vivid and recognizable traits while naturalizing and fixing 'difference' (Hall, 1997). The representation of undocumented immigrants in the news matters because President Trump's presidency has highlighted public anxiety over undocumented immigration; building a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border was an iconic image of his campaign. The representation of undocumented immigrations matters in this political moment because there is potential for real change in immigration policy to take place, especially as President Trump explicitly called on Congress to take action on the DACA program during the six-month phase-out of the program.

The representation of DACA recipients through news stories has implications for changing existing power structures, such as passing public policy that could lead to a

pathway to citizenship and voting rights, and challenging the “splitting” of ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’, ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ as Hall (1997) describes. The denial of citizenship (or the absence of any opportunity to become a citizen with voting rights) has implications on the power relationships between undocumented immigrants and Americans with citizenship papers. Undocumented immigrants without DACA status have little political power to make change to the system that offers them no opportunity to become a citizen because if they speak out in political activism, they could face deportation. Even DACA recipients, who have protection against deportation, may feel nervous to speak out because of family members who do not have protected status. Representing DACA recipients as already integrated members of the community, not as Others, challenges existing stereotypes of immigrants as victims or villains (Guerrero & Campo, 2012) or economic or legislative burdens (Chavez & Hoewe, 2012; Chavez, Whiteford & Hoewe, 2010), while also challenging the idea that there is a naturalized or fixed difference between people living in America with citizenship status and people living in America without citizenship status.

If journalists wish to humanize the DACA debate and to challenge the representation of undocumented immigrants as the Other, journalists should seek to include the testimony from parents to explain the causes or forces that led them to move their families to the U.S. If the parental population of undocumented workers is silenced, they are implicitly labeled as the criminal population responsible for the DACA situation, which does not build common ground between Americans with citizenship



status and those without. When political frames like the Executive Critique or Partisan-Political Conflict frames are used, immigration is presented as a political issue that inherently causes divisiveness and alienates people. However, many Americans may empathize with concerns that undocumented parents have for their children: the desire for their children to grow up in safe neighborhoods, receive a quality education, and have economic opportunities to build a better life.

To promote common ground by using the Human Interest frame, the passive construction of DACA recipients should be used with caution and balanced with an active construction. When DACA recipients are represented as child-like, “people brought here through no fault of their own” and “shielded from deportation,” they are represented as victims of a decision with no agency of their own. Stuart Hall (1997) describes how Blacks in America were historically stereotyped as “childish, simple, and dependent” on their White masters (Hall, 1997, p. 249). Similarly, a simplistic, vulnerable representation of DACA recipients leads to a reductive understanding of their situation. DACA recipients do not need the sympathy of Americans to protect them; they need to be recognized as people already civically engaged in important political policies that affect them and their families. Building off Ehmer and Kothari’s (2016) analysis of Burmese immigrants, if DACA recipients were represented as leaders and teachers, the American public may move beyond feeling sympathy for them and recognize them as equal partners in American society.

Visuals are a powerful way to represent DACA as a human issue in Tweeted news stories. As journalists condense news stories into truncated versions shared over social media, they should capitalize on the salience of visuals to frame an issue and balance the use of political frames (such as the Executive Critique or Partisan-Political Conflict frames) with Human Interest frames. Because visuals play an important role in catching the audience's attention on Twitter, more research is needed into how visuals are selected for news stories on Twitter. If RSS feeds and computer algorithms randomly select an image to be published in a Tweeted news story, this raises questions about the impact of technological processes on framing. When news companies use TweetDecks to schedule posts, who writes the website markup? How are algorithms coded to select visuals from videos published in online news articles? Random selection of a public protest image versus an image of two politicians at a podium could have different implications for how the public is interpreting DACA news. Visuals capture attention on Twitter and help set the tone for news. An article published with an image of protesters relays meaning that the decision should be protested and is unpopular among the public, even if the textual components of the Tweet do not explicitly state this. If computer algorithms select images to accompany news stories, this technological selection of images could have human implications on public understanding of DACA rescindment and other news topics.

As more Americans turn to social media for news consumption, journalism is adapting to publish truncated news stories in bite-sized packages with the dual purpose

to capture attention and to inform. Despite new platforms, journalists still face production deadlines and other organizational structures that influence the content of news stories (Hall, 1980; Hall et al., 1978; Gans, 1979a). Although frames are not always intentional, journalists should be cognizant of the potential of frames to influence public opinion and should consciously balance their coverage of critical immigration decisions like DACA rescindment by using political frames and Human Interest frames equally. Permanent immigration policy failed to pass in the six-month window President Trump gave to phase-out the DACA program. An increased use of Human Interest frames may be more productive to the conversation advancing immigration policy because they promote common ground among Americans of different political parties and promote common ground among Americans and immigrants, emphasizing our common goals to create a better society.

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## A Appendix Tables

Table A1: Intercoder Results: Number of Tweeted Article Frames

	Partisan-Political Conflict	Executive Critique	Law-and-Order	Human Interest	Public Resistance	Economic
<b>Class Coding Compilation 1 (n=113)</b>	28	54	14	22	36	6
<b>Class Coding Compilation 2 (n=113)</b>	32	55	9	41	38	7
<b>Class Coding Compilation 3 (n=107)*</b>	28	58	12	31	30	5
<b>Coder 1 (n=113)</b>	40	42	30	16	21	9
<b>Coder 2 (n=113)</b>	50	85	27	24	44	15
<b>Coder 3 (n=113)</b>	44	57	9	29	30	12
<b>Average Number**</b>	37	59	17	27	33	9

Table A1 1

\*Four Tweets were not coded by a student; thus they were left out of analysis.

\*\*Average number was rounded to whole numbers.