

POLI 891, Framing
Prof. Baumgartner
Fall 2012

Questions for week 3, articles giving definitions of framing

Answer ONE of the following questions. Come to class prepared to discuss ALL of them. Essays should be limited to one page single spaced and should have perhaps one-third of the essay describing the issue and the rest analyzing it. It is preferable to go into detail on a small part of the issue, giving examples or illustrations, than to remain at a general level. The devil is always in the details.

1. Enumerate the various ways the different authors use ideas that add up to something similar to a “frame.” What do they all have in common, and what distinctions are useful?
2. Several of the authors discuss something similar to the concept of a policy community: a group of specialists, experts, technocrats, or others who surround a policy issue and who may develop a dominant way of thinking about it. Discuss.
3. Sikkink and various co-authors are very prominent in IR circles for promoting the idea that norms can shift via the actions of non-state actors. From what perspectives is this no-news at all versus quite revolutionary?
4. Many of the authors in this week’s readings are heroes of constructivism. Is this literature logically connected to only a constructivist approach to political science? Which ideas seem particularly amenable to a quantitative approach?
5. Schneider and Ingram have been criticized for not building in a time element into their analysis. Looking more generally across all this week’s readings, do the authors seem sensitive to the dynamics of how frames can shift over time, or do they treat it in general as a cross-sectional or permanent characteristic of an issue?