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The American Political Science Review, Vol. 91, No. 3. (Sep., 1997), pp. 567-583.

Stable URL:
http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-0554%28199709%2991%3A3%3C567%3AMFOACL%3E2.0.CO%3B2-O

The American Political Science Review is currently published by American Political Science Association.

Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and Its Effect on Tolerance

THOMAS E. NELSON *Ohio State University*
ROSALEE A. CLAWSON *Purdue University*
ZOE M. OXLEY *Ohio State University*

Framing is the process by which a communication source, such as a news organization, defines and constructs a political issue or public controversy. Two experiments examined the effect of news frames on tolerance for the Ku Klux Klan. The first presented research participants with one of two local news stories about a Klan rally that varied by frame: One framed the rally as a free speech issue, and the other framed it as a disruption of public order. Participants who viewed the free speech story expressed more tolerance for the Klan than participants who watched the public order story. Additional data indicate that frames affect tolerance by altering the perceived importance of public order values. The relative accessibility of free speech and public order concepts did not respond to framing. A second experiment used a simulated electronic news service to present different frames and replicated these findings.

About 50 million Americans watch the CBS, NBC, or ABC network news on an average evening, and an even greater share of the public watches at least a portion of their favorite local news broadcast (Ansolabehere, Behr, and Iyengar 1993). Among those citizens who rely on only one news outlet, television is preferred over newspapers and other sources by wide margins (Ansolabehere, Behr, and Iyengar 1993), and television news also enjoys the most trust of any news source at the national and local level (Kaniss 1991). An institution with such broad reach and appeal would seem to carry great potential power to shape the political views and outlooks of ordinary citizens, yet media scholars have differed sharply about the effect of the news in general and of television news in particular, often dismissing media impact as "minimal" at best (McGuire 1985, Patterson and McClure 1976). While numerous individual and institutional reasons could account for weak media effects (Ansolabehere, Behr, and Iyengar 1993; Beck, Dalton, and Huckfeldt 1995), some failures to find media effects can be blamed on weak research designs or measurement error (Bartels 1993, Graber 1993). Further advancement of the conceptual and analytical tools needed to describe and measure the often subtle effects of the news is required.

One way the media may shape political opinion is by framing issues in distinct ways (Gamson 1992, Iyengar 1991, Nelson and Kinder 1996). Framing is the process by which a communication source, such as a news organization, defines and constructs a political issue or public controversy. In the present research, we examine how local television news outlets framed a specific, dramatic event: a demonstration and rally by the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in a small Ohio city. We explore the effect of alternative news frames for this event on tolerance for KKK activities. We also test contrasting hypotheses about how viewers psychologically process news frames, and how such frames ultimately affect viewers' thoughts about political controversies.

THE EFFECT OF NEWS FRAMES

People's reasoning about divisive political issues may be shaped by the mass media's depiction of the issues. Because both journalistic norms and market forces dampen strong ideological biases within most news organizations, especially television news (Ansolabehere, Behr, and Iyengar 1993; Beck, Dalton, and Huckfeldt 1995; Bennett 1996), media influence is bound to be more subtle than outright "propaganda" effects (Bartels 1993).[1] Examples of subtle media influence include the well-known agenda-setting and priming effects (Iyengar and Kinder 1987, Jacobs and Shapiro 1994, Krosnick and Kinder 1990, McCombs and Shaw 1972), both of which demonstrate how mere media attention to an issue or problem can affect public opinion. Framing is another possible mass media influence, but one that centers on the effects of media content rather than the mere coverage of a problem (Gamson 1992; Gamson and Lasch 1983; Gamson and Modigliani 1987, 1989; Iyengar 1991; Nelson and Kinder 1996; Nelson, Oxley, and Clawson N.d.).

By framing social and political issues in specific ways, news organizations declare the underlying causes and

Thomas E. Nelson is Assistant Professor of Political Science and Psychology, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210-1373. Rosalee A. Clawson is Assistant Professor of Political Science, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907-1363. Zoe M. Oxley is a Ph.D. candidate, Department of Political Science, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210-1373.

Portions of this paper were presented at the annual meeting of the International Society for Political Psychology, Washington, DC, July 5–8, 1995. We wish to thank Kimberly Ball, Kisha Craig, Matthew Diascro, Jason Gorell, Kelly Jones, Kendra King, and Elaine Willey for their assistance with the data collection, and Paul A. Beck, Samuel C. Patterson, Jon Krosnick, Margaret Hermann, Kathleen McGraw, Milton Lodge, and George Marcus for their comments and suggestions. This research was aided by a grant from the Office of the Vice-President for Research, Ohio State University.

[1] Many critics have argued that the restriction of media coverage within a narrow liberal-conservative latitude is itself a kind of status-quo bias (e.g., Bennett 1996, Parenti 1986). Still others have faulted the media for an excessively critical and cynical outlook concerning government institutions and political figures of both parties or for emphasizing the lurid and sensational over the weighty and substantive (e.g., Patterson 1993). Our claims about the forces restricting overt partisanship among the mainstream press should not be construed as a refutation of these other theories of media bias.

likely consequences of a problem and establish criteria for evaluating potential remedies for the problem. Iyengar (1991) argues that media stories typically exemplify either an episodic frame (focused on individual cases) or thematic frame (focused on broader social trends), with important consequences for how viewers make attributions about the causes of, and solutions to, such social problems as poverty and crime. A broader treatment can be found in the discussion by Gamson and colleagues of media frames as symbolic issue constructions (Gamson 1992; Gamson and Lasch 1983; Gamson and Modigliani 1987, 1989). In this approach, frames act like plots or story lines, lending coherence to otherwise discrete pieces of information (see also Best 1995, Entman 1993, Pan and Kosicki 1993, Schneider and Ingram 1993). By this account, frames function much like alternative formulations of a decision-making task (Carroll and Johnson 1990). Frames organize the presentation of facts and opinion within a newspaper article or television news story. Poverty, for example, may be framed in a way that emphasizes the responsibility of the poor themselves for their disadvantaged status or in a way that suggests social, economic, or political forces are to blame (Iyengar 1991). Similarly, a social policy such as welfare may be framed as a key element of the "cycle of poverty" that reinforces degenerate morals and behavior patterns or as a "helping hand" or "ladder out of poverty" for those willing to better their condition (Gamson and Lasch 1983).

Frames may originate within or outside the news organization. Journalists' common reliance on elite sources for quotes, insight, analysis, and information means that the media often serve as conduits for individuals eager to promote a certain perspective to a broader public audience. A well-placed quote or soundbite will convey a construction of an issue that could ultimately benefit a particular interest. Other symbolic devices that carry frames include visual images, metaphors, caricatures, and catchphrases (Gamson and Lasch 1983). While elites are the source of many frames and framing devices, news organizations themselves will readily construct them on their own in order to summarize concisely the kernel of a story. Such rhetorical apparatus has special appeal to television news journalists, editors, and producers, who are on constant lookout for colorful and punchy verbal and visual material with which to enliven a story (Bennett 1996, Kaniss 1991).

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESPONSES TO NEWS FRAMES

Frames, and the verbal and visual material that helps convey them, can have significant consequences for how viewers perceive and understand an issue, and they can direct the formation of individual opinions about the controversy (Iyengar 1991, Nelson and Kinder 1996). Frames shape individual understanding and opinion concerning an issue by stressing specific elements or features of the broader controversy, reducing a usually complex issue down to one or two central aspects (Nelson, Oxley, and Clawson N.d.). Attaching the label "free speech controversy" to a KKK rally, for example, stresses the fundamental civil liberties at stake, while visual images of police in riot gear emphasize the violence and disruption that could emerge during the rally. These differences in emphasis can translate into differing tolerance levels among observers of these frames.

Three separate models help explain how viewers process mass media information and how that information ultimately affects political opinion. The learning model holds that mass media messages such as television news stories influence viewer opinion by providing new information about an issue (Graber 1994). If a viewer were unaware, for example, that KKK rallies have the potential for violence, then coverage of a rally that included video footage of violent clashes among demonstrators, counterdemonstrators, and police might turn that individual's opinion toward greater restrictions on such events.

Beyond simply providing the raw data for constructing an opinion, mere coverage of an issue brings associated beliefs and feelings to the forefront of conscious thought. Such is the basis for a second, broadly accepted model of communication effects, the priming or cognitive accessibility model (Iyengar 1991, Iyengar and Kinder 1987, Jacobs and Shapiro 1994, Kinder and Sanders 1996, Zaller 1992). The emphasis on accessibility derives from a depiction of the individual as a cognitive miser or limited-capacity information processor (Fiske and Taylor 1991). Our inability to process simultaneously a large number of ideas ensures that political judgments and evaluations are based on only a subset of all potentially relevant thoughts, feelings, or other considerations (Zaller 1992). Considerations that are accessible, that is, easily retrieved from long-term memory or perhaps already present in conscious thought, will enter into such judgments with greater likelihood than inaccessible thoughts. Presumably, issues featured recently and/or repeatedly in the news will be relatively accessible to viewers and thus have greater potential to influence judgments and opinions.

However appealing accessibility explanations may be for some mass media effects, we believe they are not the primary mechanism that accounts for framing effects. Nelson and Kinder (1991) used a question-wording manipulation to simulate different frames for affirmative action and found effects of the frames on participants' opinions without corresponding changes in the accessibility of frame-related constructs, as measured in a reaction-time task (Fazio 1990). Accessibility models stress that information must be accessible to be influential, but they neglect the important qualification that equally accessible information will not have an equal effect on judgments or opinions (Anderson 1991). Expectancy-value models, and other algebraic formulations of attitudes (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980), stress that different pieces of information (facts, beliefs, values, etc.) carry different weights, reflecting their relative effect on the summary attitude. These weights correspond to the perceived importance, rele-

vance, reliability, or perceptual salience of the information (Anderson and Zalinski 1991, Taylor and Fiske 1978, van der Pligt and Eiser 1984). We suggest that media frames influence opinions by stressing specific values, facts, or other considerations, endowing them with greater apparent relevance to the issue than they might appear to have under an alternative frame. In other words, frames affect opinions simply by making certain considerations seem more important than others; these considerations, in turn, carry greater weight for the final attitude.

In the case of the Ku Klux Klan public rallies, we anticipated that local television news outlets would vary in the frames they used to portray the controversy and that differences in framing would influence viewer tolerance for KKK activities. We expected news frames emphasizing the civil liberties at stake, namely, the KKK's First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and assembly, would encourage more tolerant attitudes among viewers. By contrast, stories framing the issue with reference to the potential dangers that such rallies pose, especially the threat of violent confrontations among Klan supporters, counterdemonstrators, and police, would inspire less tolerant attitudes. We believe that any such effects would arise primarily because the emphasis placed on these alternative facets of the issue elevates the perceived relevance or importance of these considerations compared to others. So, for example, a frame emphasizing the constitutional guarantee of free speech (versus some other kind of frame) should make the value of free speech seem relatively more important and especially relevant to tolerance judgments. While framing may indeed affect the accessibility of corresponding considerations, we do not expect cognitive accessibility to be the primary carrier of framing effects.

TOLERANCE OF HATE GROUPS

Tolerance controversies are a potentially fruitful area for studying news frame effects. Small towns and large cities throughout America have witnessed numerous public speeches, rallies, and other symbolic acts by the Ku Klux Klan in recent years, many of which have attracted considerable media attention. These acts have included attempts by the KKK to erect crosses on public property, such as the capitol grounds in Columbus, Ohio, and efforts to participate in "Adopt a Highway" cleanup programs, complete with a sign in the group's honor on a designated stretch of road. Among the most notorious of the Klan's activities have been numerous public speeches and rallies, which the increasingly media-savvy KKK has parlayed into tremendous amounts of free publicity, courtesy of local newspapers and television news broadcasts. The spectacle of these events, with the outrageous rhetoric and outward appearance of Klan members juxtaposed against the fury of angry counterdemonstrators, makes them irresistible targets for local television news outlets.

The public debate over the KKK's activities and what, if anything, individuals and governments should do about them revisits age-old vexations about extending civil liberties such as freedom of speech and assembly to hate groups and other politically unpopular minorities (Gibson and Bingham 1985, Gross and Kinder 1996, Marcus et al. 1995). While some people undoubtedly share the KKK's extreme political views, most who defend their right to rally and to make public speeches argue that these activities should be tolerated because freedom of speech and assembly must extend to all, no matter how repugnant their views. Defenders of the KKK's rights claim that the idea of civil liberties is meaningless unless we are willing to grant these liberties to those with whom we disagree.[2] This view corresponds exactly with Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus's (1982) definition of tolerance: the willingness to extend liberties and protections to disliked or even hated groups.

Those who seek to curtail some of the KKK's activities do not generally discount the value of civil liberties such as freedom of speech and assembly. They argue that civil liberties may be restricted when other important values are put at risk. The KKK's history of violence and intimidation, along with its special offensiveness to certain groups, represents a significant threat to equality and civil rights, according to this view (Gibson and Bingham 1985, Hanson 1993). Furthermore, the potential for violent confrontations between the KKK and counterdemonstrators (a few of which have indeed occurred) represents a significant threat to public order and civic harmony and thus is a compelling reason for limiting the Klan's public appearances and speeches.

The debate over tolerance for hate groups thus lays bare a conflict between competing fundamental values in American political culture (Tetlock 1986). On the one hand are the almost sacred rights to free speech and assembly embodied in the Bill of Rights and endorsed, at least in the abstract, by overwhelming proportions of Americans (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982). On the other hand are the values of protection for vulnerable minority groups and the preservation of public order and safety, all of which face significant threat from the KKK and its often unruly rallies. When important values are brought into conflict by a public controversy, the opinions that develop about the issue are often ambivalent and unstable (Alvarez and Brehm 1995; Chong 1993; Feldman and Zaller 1992; Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin 1995). Chong's (1993) qualitative examination of how certain individuals reason about civil liberties shows that many people can be "talked out" of their positions on such issues as wiretapping, search and seizure, and censorship. The seeming readiness with which people switch positions on these issues suggests that they are aware of the competing values exposed by such controversies but are unable to assert firmly the domi-

[2] In an editorial supporting the KKK's right to place a cross on the grounds of the Ohio capitol, the Columbus *Dispatch* wrote (January 24, 1995): "The heartbeat of this enduring democracy is found in the First Amendment. The courts must—with unflagging zeal—guard freedom of speech against even well-intentioned encroachment."

nance of one value or consideration over another. Similarly, Kuklinski et al. (1991) found significantly different tolerance levels when participants were asked to focus on their thoughts versus their feelings about granting civil liberties to certain groups. Clearly, not only the collective public is divided over tolerance and civil liberties issues, but also individuals feel drawn in opposite directions by competing feelings, beliefs, and values. When opinions are ambivalent, the framing of an issue by the mass media or other communication agent may have an uncommon influence on opinion by shaping the values and other considerations individuals draw on when formulating their own views on the subject.

Tolerance is usually considered a function of individual and group characteristics. People vary in their tolerance for certain groups, and their degree of tolerance may be related to specific individual variables, such as educational achievement (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982). Furthermore, the activities of different groups will be tolerated to differing degrees by the broader public, depending on both attributes of the group and the nature of the times (Kuklinski et al. 1991, Stouffer 1955). Mass media coverage represents a potential contextual determinant of tolerance. We contend that tolerance reflects not only stable characteristics of individuals and groups but also more volatile environmental factors, such as the way the mass media frames the central features of the tolerance controversy.

STUDY 1

Overview

We chose the laboratory experiment as the best approach to testing our main hypotheses about the effect of media frames on tolerance and the critical role of value weighting in mediating frame effects. Through random assignment of participants to conditions, systematic manipulation of the independent variable, and control over extraneous sources of variance, laboratory experiments provide superior information about the causal relationship between independent and dependent variables (Kinder and Palfrey 1993). In Study 1, participants were assigned, on a random basis, to watch different television news stories about KKK activities; they then expressed their tolerance for the KKK. In such a laboratory setting, any differences in tolerance will almost certainly be due to the experimental manipulation (the different news stories). In addition, the laboratory setting permits measurement of the psychological processing of media messages, which would be very difficult, if not impossible, to obtain in other research settings.

Design and Procedure

The participants were 222 undergraduate students (107 women, 115 men) enrolled in introductory political science courses. They received extra course credit for their contribution. Participant groups ranged in size from one to five persons. The experiment followed a completely randomized, between-subjects design, with two manipulations: (1) the news story frame (free speech versus public order) and (2) the cognitive processing task (reaction time task versus importance rating task).

A convenience sample of undergraduates inevitably raises questions about the representativeness of any findings (Sears 1986). Table 1 summarizes the demographic and political characteristics of our sample and compares it with a representative sample of Ohio adults. The data show that our sample is not homogeneous, but instead varies appreciably on important demographic and political variables. Far from being the proverbial "college sophomores," fully half of the Study 1 participants are seniors. Still, we do not claim that the *level* of tolerance expressed by the participants accurately reflects that of the U.S. adult population.

TABLE 1. Demographic and Political Characteristics of Participants

	Study 1	Study 2	TOPS Sample[a]
Sex			
Female	48.2%	41.0%	57.1%
Male	51.8	59.0	42.9
Race/ethnicity			
White	83.8	82.1	89.6
Black	5.0	12.8	8.0
Asian	6.3	2.6	.5
Hispanic	1.8	0.0	1.4
Other	3.2	2.6	1.5
Political ideology[b]			
1 = very liberal	4.5	5.1	
2	7.2	25.6	11.7
3	16.7	17.9	18.2
4 = moderate	26.6	17.9	8.9
5	18.0	15.4	32.0
6	19.8	17.9	29.1
7 = very conservative	7.2	0.0	
Party identification			
1 = strong Democrat	5.0	7.7	11.1
2	10.4	28.2	16.9
3	13.1	15.4	11.9
4 = Independent	22.5	15.4	12.8
5	18.0	7.7	12.4
6	21.2	20.5	20.4
7 = strong Republican	9.9	5.1	14.1
Class in college			
First year	14.0	35.9	
Sophomore	14.0	28.2	
Junior	19.8	23.1	
Senior	49.5	12.8	
Graduate	2.3	0.0	

Note: Entries are the percentage of respondents who fall into each category for each variable. Missing data are excluded. Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding error.

[a]The Ohio Political Survey (TOPS) was a representative telephone survey of 808 voting-age Ohio residents conducted during November and December 1994.

[b]Respondents in the two experiments marked their ideological position on a seven-point scale. TOPS respondents were first asked to identify themselves as "liberal," "moderate," "middle of the road," or "conservative." Those in the moderate and middle-of-the-road categories (56% of the sample) were then asked if they considered themselves "closer to" liberal or conservative.

TABLE 2. Content of KKK News Stories, Study 1

	Free Speech Frame	Public Order Frame
Theme	Members of the KKK and those protesting their appearance were determined to get out their message.	KKK rallies have the potential for disorder and physical violence between KKK supporters and those protesting their appearance.
Quotes	"No free speech for racists," on sign held by protester. "I came down here to hear what they have to say and I think I should be able to listen if I want to," spoken by a supporter of the KKK.	"Here you have a potential for some real sparks in the crowd," spoken by an observer. "The tension between Klan protesters and supporters came within seconds of violence," spoken by a reporter.
Images	Chanting of protesters. KKK leaders speaking before a microphone.	Police officers standing in front of Klan members protecting them from the protesters.
Interviews	Three of the four people interviewed were Klan supporters who wanted to hear the Klan's message.	All three people interviewed emphasized the violence and disruption of public order that they had witnessed.

We do believe, however, that it is reasonable to assume the effect of news framing observed in our sample would not differ drastically from that of most other groups.

News Frames. Participants began the experiment by watching one of two different seven-minute videotapes that was described as a compilation of stories from recent local television news broadcasts. Each tape began with the same five-minute "warm-up" segment: a story about the development of a local science museum, two brief human interest stories, and one commercial. The final story, immediately following the commercial, concerned the KKK rally. We videotaped news broadcasts from different Columbus television stations during the period surrounding two highly publicized KKK rallies, expecting that any stories about these rallies would be captured by a relatively small number of frames. We selected as our critical stories two reports about the same event—a speech and rally by the KKK on the steps of the Ross County Courthouse in Chillicothe, Ohio—broadcast by two different Columbus stations. Each story featured a reporter on location, with video of KKK speakers, crowd scenes, and interviews. Although there was considerable overlap in the stories, especially in their imagery, they exemplified two alternative framings of the event: a free speech frame and a public order frame. The former emphasized the right of KKK members to speak to the public and, especially, the right of their supporters and the curious to hear what the Klan had to say. The latter highlighted the disturbances that erupted during the rally and included images of police officers in riot gear. Table 2 provides a summary of the stories' content. Appendix A contains a more complete discussion of our procedure for selecting these stories.

Tolerance Measures. Immediately following the videotape, participants answered two questions concerning their tolerance for the KKK. The first asked: "Do you support or oppose allowing members of the Ku Klux Klan to hold public rallies in our city?" The second asked: "Do you support or oppose allowing members of the Ku Klux Klan to make a speech in our city?" Respondents used a seven-point scale, anchored by "strongly support" and "strongly oppose," to indicate their tolerance for the KKK.

Cognitive Processing Tasks. Following the tolerance measures, half of the participants completed a reaction time task, which measured the cognitive accessibility of such concepts as freedom and disorder, while the remaining participants completed an importance rating task, which measured their perceptions of the importance of free speech and public order values with respect to tolerance for the KKK. Both of these tasks were presented via an interactive computerized questionnaire.

The reaction time task closely followed the word/nonword judgment paradigm suggested by Fazio (1990). Participants viewed a series of letter strings flashed in the center of the computer monitor and indicated as quickly as possible whether the letters constituted a true English word, like "center," or a nonsense word, like "treskl." They did so by pressing one of two keys, clearly labeled "WORD" and "NOT A WORD." After two practice trials, four categories of word probes appeared in random order: words related to free speech (e.g., "liberty"), words related to public order (e.g., "danger"), neutral filler words (e.g., "planet"), and nonsense words. Appendix B contains a complete listing of the words. The computer recorded the duration of time between the initial display of the word and the keypress. Response time was taken as an indicator of the relative accessibility of the concept in memory, with more accessible concepts producing faster times (Fazio 1990).

For the importance rating task, five values, beliefs, or other considerations with respect to the tolerance issue were presented. Participants were asked to indicate "how IMPORTANT each of these ideas is to you when you think about the question of whether or not the Ku Klux Klan should be allowed to make speeches and hold demonstrations in public." Among these five statements were two summarizing civil liberties perspectives on the controversy and one statement stressing public order considerations. Appendix B gives the full text of these questions.

TABLE 3. Tolerance Judgments, Reaction Times, and Importance Ratings by Framing Condition, Study 1

	Free Speech Framing Condition	Public Order Framing Condition
Tolerance for rallies[a]	3.96	3.31
Tolerance for speeches[a]	4.17	3.54
Reaction time for free speech words[b]	6.34	6.42
Reaction time for disorder words[b]	6.43	6.53
Reaction time for filler words[b]	6.35	6.48
Importance of free speech[c]	5.49	5.25
Importance of public order[c]	4.75	5.43

[a]Higher members indicate greater tolerance.
[b]Entries are natural logs of reaction times in milliseconds.
[c]Higher numbers indicate greater importance.

We randomly assigned participants to one or the other processing task to eliminate the contamination of these measures. For example, the importance item "freedom of speech for all citizens is a fundamental American right" by its mere appearance may have primed the concept of freedom of speech for all respondents, rendering subsequent reaction time measures for that concept ambiguous (Katz and Hass 1988).

Other Measures. To conclude the experiment, respondents completed a number of items measuring beliefs, opinions, and demographic variables potentially related to tolerance for the KKK. Included were authoritarianism, measured by a four-item version of the *F*-scale (Lane 1955); racial prejudice, measured by a four-item version of the modern racism scale (McConahay, Hardee, and Batts 1981); support for free speech rights and civil liberties (adapted from Kuklinski et al. 1991 and Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982); and concern about public order. General attitudes toward the KKK were measured by a series of semantic differential trait scales (e.g., "peaceful—aggressive"). Also included were feeling thermometers for the KKK and civil rights leaders. Appendix C contains the full text of these items.

Results

Effects of News Frames on Tolerance. We expected that participants in the free speech framing condition would express greater tolerance for KKK public rallies and speeches than those in the public order condition. Independent-samples (Student's) *t*-tests showed higher levels of tolerance for KKK speeches ($t_{220} = 2.33, p = .02$) and rallies ($t_{220} = 2.34, p = .02$) among participants in the free speech framing condition than among participants in the public order condition. Mean tolerance scores for the two conditions appear in Table 3.

In addition to producing differences in tolerance for KKK activities, the news story frames were expected to affect the relation between tolerance for the Klan and other related opinions (Nelson and Kinder 1996). By constructing the issue as especially relevant to a single value (freedom of speech or maintaining public order), the two frames sent implicit messages about which considerations should dominate opinion. We therefore hypothesized that attitudes toward civil liberties in general and freedom of expression in particular should relate more closely to tolerance for the KKK among participants in the free speech condition than among participants in the public order condition. In contrast, we expected that attitudes toward government efforts to maintain public order would relate more closely to tolerance for the KKK among participants in the public order framing condition. To test these hypotheses, we regressed tolerance for the KKK on a set of predictor variables, including support for civil liberties, support for freedom of expression, and support for government efforts to maintain and preserve public order. The regressions included other variables potentially related to tolerance, based on extant research (e.g., Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982): authoritarianism, racial prejudice, attitudes toward the KKK, and feeling thermometer ratings of the KKK and civil rights leaders. Two regressions were performed for both tolerance outcome measures (tolerance of KKK speeches and KKK rallies): one for participants in the free speech condition and one for those in the public order condition. The results of these analyses are displayed in Table 4.

The results provide mixed support for these hypotheses. Support for civil liberties did indeed predict tolerance for KKK speeches and rallies more strongly in the free speech frame than in the public order frame. This difference between framing conditions in the regression coefficient was statistically significant for the speeches measure ($p = .01$) but not quite significant ($p < .08$) for the rallies measure.[3] Conversely, public order concerns significantly predicted tolerance for KKK speeches in the public order condition but not in the free speech condition; the difference between the conditions did not reach statistical significance, however. The effect of public order concerns on tolerance for KKK *rallies* did not vary by experimental condition. Finally, contrary to our prediction, the effect of support for freedom of expression on tolerance for the KKK was somewhat more powerful in the public order condition, although the difference was not significant.

Psychological Processing of News Frames. The reaction time and importance rating tasks were designed to test two alternative hypotheses about the psychological processes that mediate framing effects. The framing of

[3] To establish the statistical significance of these differences, we reestimated the regression models for the entire sample and included variables representing the experimental condition (dummy variable) and the interactions between the experimental condition and the crucial predictor variables (support for free speech, endorsement of civil liberties, support for public order). These interaction terms, estimating the difference between experimental conditions in the effect of some predictor on tolerance (say, the effect of support for free speech on tolerance for KKK rallies), then can be tested for statistical significance.

Table 4. Regression Model Predicting Tolerance for KKK Speeches and Rallies, by Framing Condition, Study 1

	Tolerance for Speeches		Tolerance for Rallies	
	Free Speech	Public Order	Free Speech	Public Order
Public order	−.25	−.44**	−.35	−.34*
	(.19)	(.17)	(.22)	(.17)
Civil liberties	.41***	.07	.33**	.11
	(.12)	(.11)	(.13)	(.11)
Freedom of expression	.70***	.92***	.67***	.88***
	(.15)	(.16)	(.17)	(.17)
Attitudes toward the KKK	.48***	.18	.52***	.32
	(.17)	(.22)	(.19)	(.23)
F-Scale	−.16	.09	−.12	.19
	(.14)	(.15)	(.16)	(.16)
Modern racism	−.17	.10	−.15	.01
	(.13)	(.13)	(.15)	(.14)
Feeling thermometer: KKK	−.05	.08	−.04	.05
	(.09)	(.12)	(.11)	(.12)
Feeling thermometer: Civil rights leaders	−.21**	−.01	−.15	−.04
	(.09)	(.08)	(.10)	(.08)
Ideology	−.22*	−.13	−.23*	−.14
	(.12)	(.10)	(.14)	(.11)
Number of cases	113	109	113	109
Adjusted R^2	.44	.46	.36	.43

Note: Table entries are unstandardized regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded so that a higher score indicates a more tolerant attitude toward the KKK. The independent variables are coded so that a high score indicates high support for public order, high support for freedom of expression, high support for civil liberties, a positive attitude toward the traits of KKK members, more authoritarian attitudes, racial intolerance, favorable evaluations of the KKK and civil rights leaders, and a liberal ideology.
*$p < .10$; **$p < .05$; ***$p < .01$.

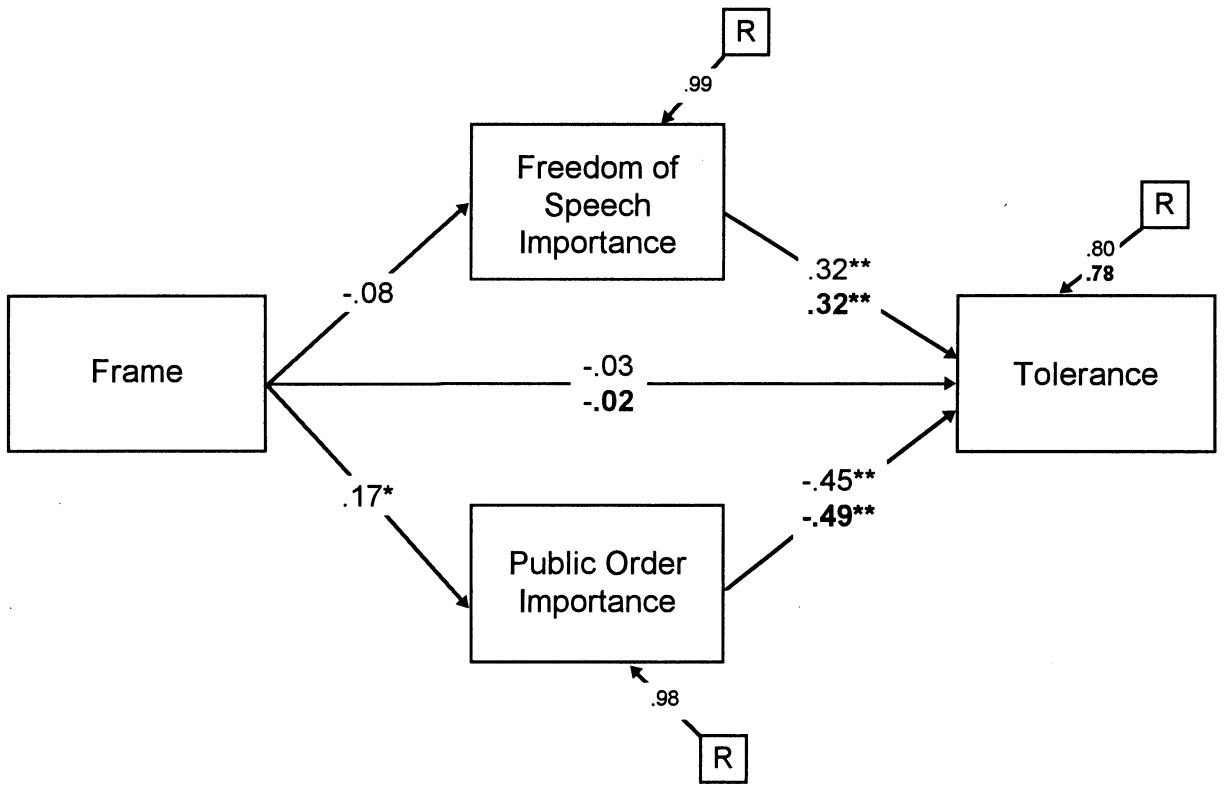
news stories may influence opinion either by increasing the cognitive accessibility of such concepts as freedom and public order or by increasing the perceived importance or relevance of these values for tolerance.

If framing effects are mediated by accessibility, then participants should respond relatively swiftly to words most consonant with the frame they viewed. Thus, participants in the free speech framing condition should have responded more quickly to words related to free speech than to words related to public order, while participants in the public order condition should have displayed the opposite pattern. The reaction times did not conform to this pattern. Before analysis, a natural log transformation of response times was conducted, to correct for skewness in the distribution. Extreme outliers were also removed from the analysis. The transformed reaction times were averaged across the two critical categories of word probes (free speech and public order) for each participant. The data then were analyzed using a 2 × 2—(free speech versus public order probe) × (free speech versus public order framing condition)—repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA), with type of probe treated as a within-subject variable. While there was a main effect of probe type (all participants, regardless of video condition, responded more quickly to free speech than public order words, $F_{1,81} = 36.51$, $p < .001$), probe type did not *interact* with frame condition ($F_{1,81} < 1$), indicating that participants did not respond more or less quickly to specific categories of probes as a result of their framing condition.[4] Refer to Table 3 for the relevant means.

If framing effects are instead mediated by perceived importance, then participants in the free speech condition should rate free speech values as more important than should participants in the public order condition. Conversely, the latter should rate public order values as more important than should the former. To test this hypothesis, we combined the scores for the two free speech items (Pearson's $r = .36$) into one measure and analyzed the importance ratings according to a 2 × 2—(free speech versus public order values) × (free speech versus public order framing condition)—repeated-measures ANOVA, with values treated as a within-subject variable. Average ratings for the two types of considerations, displayed in Table 3, conform

[4] To control for individual differences in response quickness, researchers commonly use filler words and calculate difference scores between the target and filler words (Fazio 1990). We also performed a repeated measures ANOVA on difference scores, but the results are somewhat misleading. Subjects in the free speech condition responded more quickly to all probes, *including filler items*. As a result, the difference scores, which subtract reaction times to the neutral fillers from reaction times to the other two probe categories, appear to indicate that reaction times were quickest for free speech words among subjects in the public order condition. Again, this is only relative to the neutral filler probes; the fastest reaction times to free speech probes were, in fact, observed for subjects in the free speech condition (refer to Table 3). For clarity, we report results only for the logarithmic transformed scores, not for the difference scores. The ANOVA for the difference scores also fails to show the critical interaction predicted by the accessibility hypothesis.

FIGURE 1. Path Analysis Testing the Mediational Role of Importance Judgments for Framing Effects, Study 1



Note: Coefficients are equivalent to standardized partial regression (β) weights. Frame is dummy coded such that the free speech frame condition = 0, and the public order frame condition = 1. Freedom of speech and public order importance variables are coded such that higher numbers indicate greater perceived importance of the value. Tolerance is coded such that higher numbers indicate greater tolerance. In the paths directly leading to tolerance, coefficients in regular typeface are for tolerance of rallies; coefficients in boldface are for tolerance of speeches. Residual variance is indicated by boxed *R*'s.
*$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$.

exactly to our predictions: Free speech values are rated as somewhat more important by participants in the free speech framing condition, while public order values are rated as considerably more important by participants in the public order framing condition. The critical interaction from the ANOVA was significant ($F_{1,134} = 4.33$, $p < .05$). Refer to Table 3 for the means.

The results thus far substantiate our main points: Media framing of the KKK controversy significantly affected tolerance for the group, and this effect came about primarily because the two frames stressed the relevance or importance of different values (free speech versus public order), not because the frames altered the cognitive accessibility of those values. In order to ensure that value importance truly mediated the effect of the frames, a path-analytic or causal modeling analysis is required (Asher 1983). The path model illustrated in Figure 1 was tested, using OLS regression to estimate path coefficients. The results support our expectation: Framing condition (in the analysis, a dummy variable) affected the perceived importance of free speech and public order, which in turn affected viewer tolerance toward the KKK. As was apparent from the initial examination of the mean importance ratings, most of the effect of framing was transmitted via the perceived importance of public order. In fact, the effect of framing on the perceived importance of free speech, while consistent with our predictions, is nonsignificant—perhaps because of the already stratospheric level of support enjoyed by free speech values (see Appendix C). A subsequent causal analysis showed that the accessibility of concepts related to free speech and public order did not mediate the effect of framing on tolerance.

Discussion

Two lessons may be learned from Study 1. The first is that news framing of a civil liberties confrontation matters for viewers' tolerance. Participants in this experiment, who witnessed news reports about the very same event, expressed significantly different opinions depending upon media framing of that event. Those who saw a story framing the KKK rally as a free speech issue expressed greater tolerance for the Klan than did those who saw a story depicting it as a potentially explosive clash between two angry groups. The second lesson is that the effect of news frames on tolerance judgments is carried by the frames' influence on the perceived importance of specific values evoked by this

issue, especially, as it turns out, the importance of maintaining public order. For framing that elevated public order concerns, tolerance was relatively lower.

The Study 1 results are intriguing in part because the experimental stimuli were extracted from the real world of television news and not concocted in the researchers' imagination. This external validity comes at a price, however: While the two stories differed in terms of framing, they also may have differed in other subtle ways that we could not control. Although the mediational analysis lends credibility to the claim that the crucial difference really is the frames and their emphasis on the importance of different values, even greater credibility would accrue from a replication of these results using experimental stimuli *expressly created to represent these two frames*. This was our primary goal in Study 2.

STUDY 2

Overview

Study 2 preserves the essential conceptual features of Study 1 but changes the presentation of the frame stimuli and adds a second measure of value importance. Rather than rely on actual news coverage of an event, we constructed artificial (but realistic) free speech and public order frames and embedded them in an electronic newspaper-style format. We thus could exert greater control over the information that varied across framing conditions, minimizing the chance that idiosyncratic features of the news stories confounded with the frames were responsible for the observed effects. A second measure of value importance—a values ranking procedure (Rokeach 1973)—was added to the importance rating procedure used in Study 1.

Design and Procedure

The participants in Study 2 were 71 students, who received extra credit. They were somewhat younger and more liberal than those in Study 1, but they still varied appreciably in their basic demographic and political characteristics (refer to Table 1). Participants were randomly assigned to either a free speech or a public order news frame condition. After reading the news story, each completed either an importance rating or ranking task. Thus, the experiment incorporated a 2 × 2—(free speech versus public order frame) × (importance rating versus importance ranking)—between-subjects design.

The computer-controlled experiment was described to participants as a study of how effectively Internet news services provide information to the public. Participants were told they would view images from a "prototype" of the campus newspaper's World Wide Web news page. Their task was to read the stories presented on screen and answer a series of questions concerning their reactions. Participants saw three stories, the first of which was the KKK story, framed in either free speech or public order terms.

Both KKK stories presented the same set of facts about the controversy: (1) The university administration was considering a request from the KKK to hold a speech and rally on campus; (2) various courts had ruled that the KKK has a constitutional right to free expression; and (3) similar rallies around Ohio had sparked violent clashes between KKK supporters and counterdemonstrators. The full text of each story appears in Appendix D. While this basic information about the controversy was held constant across the two stories, additional features—the headline, picture, and quotes within the body of the article—established each story's frame. The photograph accompanying the free speech frame, for example, showed the U.S. Constitution, while the photograph accompanying the public order frame showed police forcefully suppressing a riot. Likewise, "Clifford Strong," a fictional law professor, was quoted in the former as stressing the preeminence of free speech, while claiming in the latter that "safety must be our top priority."

After reading the story, participants answered a common series of questions, beginning with the tolerance item: "Do you think that O.S.U. should or should not allow the Ku Klux Klan to hold a rally on campus?" The students then completed one of two tasks designed to measure the perceived importance of upholding freedom of speech and maintaining safety and security on campus, with respect to the KKK controversy. The importance rating task resembled the task from Study 1 and asked respondents to rate the importance of "a citizen's freedom to speak or hear what he or she wants" and "campus safety and security."

The importance ranking task was intended to capture the tradeoff between the values of freedom of expression and public order implied by the KKK controversy. Respondents were shown four statements: "A person's freedom to speak and hear what he or she wants should be protected"; "Campus safety and security should be protected"; "Racism and prejudice should be opposed"; and "Ohio State's reputation should be protected." Participants were instructed to use the computer mouse to select the most important concern "based on how important (it is) to you when you think about whether or not OSU should allow the Ku Klux Klan to hold a speech and rally on campus," then the second most important, and so on, until all four were ranked. The program precluded ranking the same option more than once or ranking fewer than four options. Participants were permitted, however, to change their rankings as often as they wished.

Results

Framing significantly affected tolerance for the KKK rally, with those in the free speech frame expressing greater tolerance than those in the public order frame ($t_{69} = 1.73, p < .05$). Table 5 displays the means by condition. The table also shows that framing had the expected effect on the ranking and rating of free speech and public order concerns. An ANOVA was performed on the importance ratings, treating value (campus safety versus free expression) as a within-subject variable and framing condition (free speech versus

TABLE 5. Tolerance, Importance Ratings, and Importance Rankings by Framing Condition, Study 2

	Free Speech Framing Condition	Public Order Framing Condition
Tolerance[a]	4.38	3.54
Importance rating of free speech[b]	6.38	5.88
Importance rating of campus safety and security[b]	6.46	6.92
Importance ranking of free speech[b]	3.11	2.69
Importance ranking of campus safety and security[b]	2.84	3.00

[a]Higher numbers indicate greater tolerance.
[b]Higher numbers indicate greater importance.

public order) as a between-subjects variable. The critical interaction between framing condition and importance rating was reliable, $F_{1,37} = 3.62$, $p < .07$.[5] A similar ANOVA for the ranking data did not indicate a significant interaction, $F_{1,30} = .87$, $p < .36$. The two value ranking variables were recoded into simple dichotomies, the first indicating whether the participant had ranked free speech concerns as the most important concern or had ranked it at position 2-4, the second likewise indicating whether or not the participant ranked safety and security concerns as the most important. Analysis of these dichotomous variables indicated a small framing effect: 42.1% of participants in the free speech frame rated free speech concerns as the most important, versus 15.4% in the public order condition ($\chi^2 = 2.57$, $p = .11$); 46.2% of participants in the public order condition rated safety and security concerns as the most important, versus 31.6% in the free speech condition ($\chi^2 = .70$, $p = .40$).

The mediational role of value importance was tested using a path analytic procedure similar to that described for Study 1. Only participants who completed the importance rating task were included. The results appear in Figure 2. They show a pattern quite similar to that found in Study 1: Framing significantly affects the importance assigned to the value of public order, which in turn significantly affects tolerance for the KKK. While the importance of freedom of expression is a powerful predictor of tolerance, it is not significantly affected by framing.

Discussion

Study 2 reaffirms the conclusions reached for Study 1 with respect to both the effect of news frames on tolerance for hate groups and the presumed mediator of a frame's effect, namely, the importance accorded to one specific value among the many brought into focus by the controversy. Because we held constant features of the fictional news stories beyond the two frames, the results relieve concerns that idiosyncratic aspects of the actual news stories used in Study 1 were responsible for frame effects. Both the ranking and the rating measures of value importance responded to issue framing, although the effect appears stronger for the rating measure. This finding is, in itself, instructive: It suggests that a single frame may enhance the perceived importance of a single value but will not necessarily influence the *relative* preferences among a set of values.

[5] The relatively small number of cases here, as well as the skewed distribution of the importance responses, probably robs the F test of some statistical power.

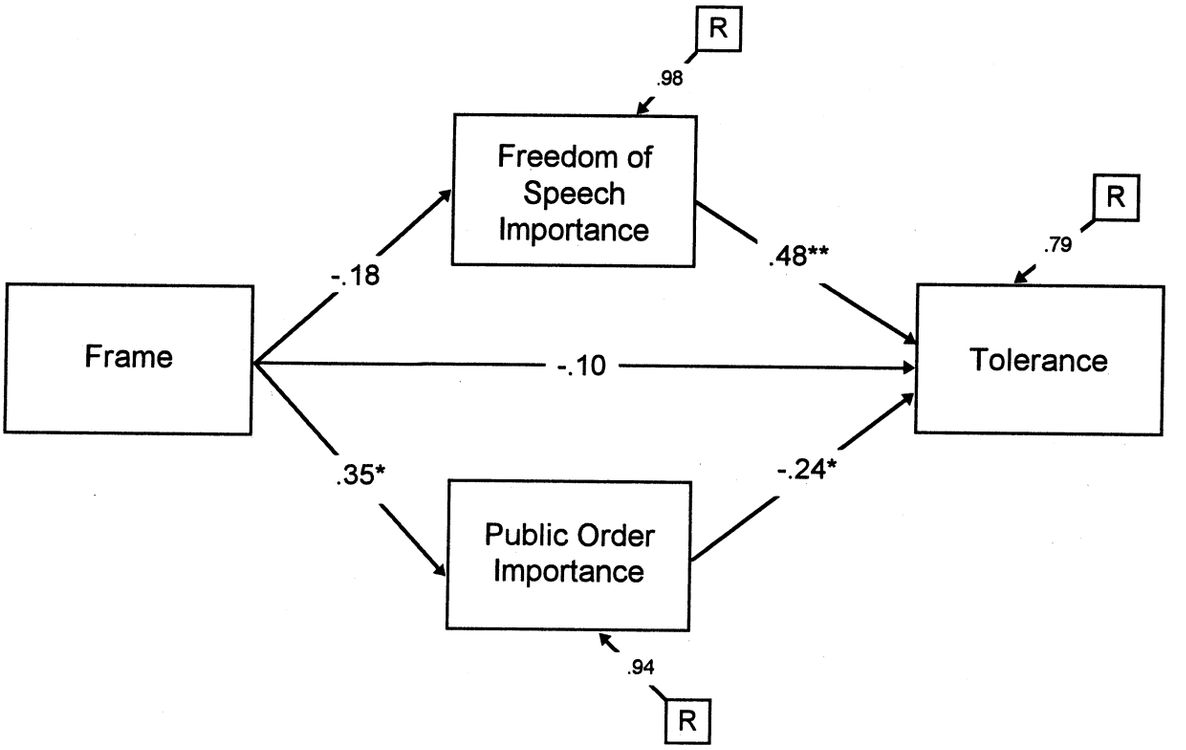
CONCLUSION

The results of these two studies substantiate the claim that the choices journalists make about how to cover a story—from the words, phrases, and images they convey to the broader "angle" they take on a controversy—can result in substantially different portrayals of the very same event and the broader controversy it represents. These alternative portrayals, or frames, can exert appreciable influence on citizens' perceptions of the issue and, ultimately, the opinions they express. Previous approaches to framing have shown how frames affect perceptions of causality and responsibility for social problems such as crime and poverty (Iyengar 1991) and the relationship between policy opinions and predictors of those opinions (Kinder and Sanders 1990, 1996; Nelson and Kinder 1996). The present results show a clear effect of news frames on an entirely different kind of judgment: the willingness to extend civil liberties protections to ignoble and potentially dangerous groups. These findings affirm that tolerance decisions reflect not only long-standing individual and group characteristics but also short-term political forces, including the activity of the mass media. Although these experiments took place within the laboratory, the first relied on actual media coverage of a real event that took place within the participants' local area, while the second employed an engaging and highly realistic presentation of the key manipulation. These real-life details produced a vivid and profound experimental setting.

News Frames and Public Opinion

Bartels (1993, 267) calls research on mass media "one of the most notable embarrassments of modern social science" for its repeated failure to demonstrate significant mass media effects. It is indeed a bewildering paradox that the discipline continually produces reports of minimal media effects even as more astronomical amounts of resources are invested in an industry that almost daily makes further inroads into our personal lives and public affairs. Refinements in research design and measurement will surely turn up previously

FIGURE 2. Path Analysis Testing the Mediational Role of Importance Judgments for Framing Effects, Study 2



Note: Coefficients are equivalent to standardized partial regression (β) weights. Frame is dummy coded such that the free speech frame condition = 0, and the public order frame condition = 1. Freedom of speech and public order importance variables are coded such that higher numbers indicate greater perceived importance of the value. Tolerance is coded such that higher numbers indicate greater tolerance. Residual variance is indicated by boxed *R*'s. $^{*}p \leq .05$; $^{**}p \leq .01$.

hidden effects, but we also must advance our theories and conceptions of mass communication influence. The evidence is steadily accumulating that framing is a powerful concept for explicating the activities of journalists and news organizations. It also provides leverage for understanding the behaviors of public relations specialists, "spin doctors," and other elites and professionals whose job it is to produce congenial concepts, beliefs, and opinions among the broader public.

Public debate over such controversial issues as tolerance for hate groups takes place within a specific "symbolic environment" consisting of the images, slogans, stereotypes, and other devices that anchor and illuminate different positions (Gamson and Lasch 1983). Individuals and groups with interests at stake expend great effort in articulating a packaged message that may contain both hard evidence as well as symbolic content designed to leave lasting impressions in an information-dense climate. The battle for public opinion is in part a fight to shape public definitions of the debate—a tug-of-war between "contestable categories" (Edelman 1993) to be applied to a controversy. The mass media play a vital role in this process, either as conveyers of elite-sponsored frames or as originators of frames in their own right (Gamson and Modigliani 1989). As we have seen, the choice of a frame may have important implications for the balance of public opinion on an issue. Labeling the KKK controversy as a "free speech issue" tilts opinion in the group's favor, while the label "public safety issue" tilts it in the opposite direction.

Psychological Responses to News Frames

Coming to appreciate the power of the media to shape public views on political problems requires a broader understanding of message processing than is implied by simple learning or priming models. Certainly, a major function of the news media is to inform the public, that is, to provide reliable new information that shapes our beliefs about important people, places, and events (Zaller 1992). But beyond this reporting function, the media also provide cues about how we should integrate our beliefs into attitudes. In this vein, theories of media priming (Iyengar and Kinder 1987) make the sensible claim that when the media focus attention on an issue, that issue should come to a citizen's awareness relatively more easily and exert correspondingly greater effect on opinion. The media's influence on the weight, importance, or relevance viewers attach to particular values and other considerations goes beyond mere accessibility, however. In numerous ways, through both

verbal and visual channels, the media provide hints about what is truly at issue in a public controversy. While it is not inevitable that audiences will take the media's word for it, these studies show that the hints can be compelling.

It is important to note that while many researchers have presented evidence consistent with the priming model, few have conducted direct tests (using, for example, reaction-time measures) of the crucial accessibility link. The evidence from the present pair of studies reveals that the accessibility of different considerations is not nearly as important as the *weight* attached to these considerations. There are many ideas about how to conceptualize and measure weight in research on judgment, decision making, and attitudes. The concept of weighting reflects the seemingly obvious point that some kinds of information are more important than others for a particular judgment, regardless of their value. In selecting a restaurant, for example, one may be very impressed by fine table linens and a lengthy wine list but would probably overlook those attributes if the food and service were terrible. Anderson equates weight with "psychological importance" (e.g., Anderson and Zalinski 1991) while others equate it with perceived relevance (van der Pligt and Eiser 1984), subjective confidence (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980), reliability and consistency (Kelley 1973), and perceptual vividness (Taylor and Fiske 1978).

Some researchers ask respondents to self-report on subjective weight (e.g., Ericsson and Simon 1980; Zaller and Feldman 1992), while others claim that introspective reports on the factors affecting one's judgments are hopelessly unreliable (Nisbett and Wilson 1977). The traditional open-ended "likes and dislikes" questions that appear in such surveys as the National Election Study assume that respondents can accurately identify the information that has the greatest effect on their political opinions, but these items have been criticized as revealing little about what actually influences opinions and behavior (Rahn, Krosnick, and Breuning 1994; Smith 1989). In our studies, participants rated or ranked the importance of different values with respect to their tolerance for the KKK. These judgments (especially the ratings) resonated with the frame to which participants were exposed; moreover, the causal analysis supports our contention that these judgments about the importance of difference values mediated the effect of the frames on tolerance. We find this evidence persuasive, and we hope it will inspire more work to establish the validity of importance measures.

Memory, Ambivalence, Communication, and Opinion

Our results contribute to the growing body of evidence questioning mere accessibility models of political judgment and opinion (Lodge, Steenbergen, and Brau 1995; Rahn, Krosnick, and Breuning 1994). Zaller (1992) and others have argued that political opinions are "top-of-the-head" phenomena, formed from whatever cognitions and emotions happen to be accessible at the time the attitude is expressed (see also Kelley and Mirer 1974). This memory-based model of opinion, coupled with evidence about Americans' dismal command of politically relevant facts and information (Kinder and Sears 1985), has led many students of mass politics to question the quality of citizens' political judgments and opinions (Converse 1964). If we believe that opinions are purely ephemeral, swinging wildly from side to side due to arbitrary changes in the relative accessibility of a few concepts, then we must be very pessimistic indeed about the caliber of popular opinion regarding political matters, especially if we question the depth of knowledge that informs those opinions.

"Top-of-the-head" models of opinion suggest that information must be accessible at the time an opinion is expressed in order to have influence and that all accessible considerations will have equal effect on the expressed opinion. The first claim is disputed by a number of memory researchers (Anderson 1991, Hastie and Park 1986, Manis et al. 1993), while the present results appear to contest the second. We do not dismiss the possibility that frames, or any other kind of political communication, *may* prime specific considerations, making them more accessible and hence more influential for subsequent judgments. Still, we believe that the expression of attitudes is a more mindful process than top-of-the-head models imply. Our results point to a more deliberate integration process, whereby participants consider the importance and relevance of each accessible idea. Just as accessibility may be regulated by contextual cues, so the perceived weight of specific ideas may respond to messages from the political environment.

While evidence suggesting an impoverished and superficial public opinion abounds, it now appears that the pessimism has been overstated. Refinements in measurement techniques have restored some faith in the rationality of public opinion (Krosnick and Berent 1993, Page and Shapiro 1992). Still, it is not clear what opinion instability and inconsistency signify. They may indicate the presence of "nonattitudes"—poorly thought-out utterances created mainly to conceal a lack of mastery of the political world (Converse 1964). Some volatility of opinion also could signify ambivalence, a dynamic tension fostered by the awareness of two or more sides to an issue, and a hesitation to side decisively with only one (Alvarez and Brehm 1995; Cacioppo and Berntson 1994; Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin 1995). Political campaigns and persuaders of all stripes exploit this ambivalence by using frames as levers to move opinion in their direction. If partisans can effectively claim ownership of a specific value while asserting its special significance or high priority, then they are in a strong position to capture public favor.

Support for the principle of free speech is a powerful current in American public opinion. Our results concur with those of others (Gross and Kinder 1996) in showing the dominating influence of such values on tolerance for the KKK—an influence that largely resisted the frames' effect.[6] While tolerance as a general

[6] Some reviewers of this paper suggested that a control group would

principle enjoys widespread support among Americans (Marcus et al. 1995), including the participants in these studies,[7] the volatility and inconsistency in support for civil liberties in specific cases (Chong 1993) or for specific groups (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982) reveals the ambivalence that permeates the public's views. Our results suggest that even though free speech values outshine most others, the public recognizes that unqualified and unyielding support for freedom of speech may impede other values, such as preserving civic harmony. When a competing value is brought into greater prominence and embodied with special significance and legitimacy, tolerance may weaken. While it would be going too far to say that underneath every publicly tolerant citizen is a privately intolerant one, it does appear that within many citizens are the makings of greater or lesser tolerance depending upon many things, including framing.

APPENDIX A: SELECTION OF KKK NEWS STORIES, STUDY 1

We chose our KKK news stories based on the results of a pilot study conducted during spring 1994. Over several months we collected a number of local television news stories concerning the activities of the Klan in central Ohio. We selected four stories to use in the pilot study, two of which, in our view, exemplified free speech frames, and two of which exemplified public order frames.

Sixty-eight undergraduates enrolled in introductory political science classes participated in our pilot study in exchange for extra course credit. They were randomly assigned to view one of the four news stories about the KKK. They then were asked to describe, in an open-ended format, any "message" they thought was contained in the story. Next, we provided them with a checklist of specific messages that might be contained in a newscast about the KKK and asked them to check all the messages that pertained to the story they had just viewed. These messages included such statements as "free speech for all people and groups is an important right" and "Ku Klux Klan rallies may create disorder and/or violence."

The participants agreed with our a priori assessment and perceived both the stories that we considered to be free speech frames as containing free speech messages, but they saw one of the stories as containing additional messages. We decided to use the "purer" free speech frame. Similarly, the two stories we considered public order frames were also perceived that way by the participants, although one was considered a less adulterated version. Again, we chose to use the purer frame. Conveniently, the two stories we selected covered the same KKK rally.

While the participants detected elements of the free speech and public order frames, only five expressed any sense that the coverage was "biased" for or against the KKK's right to hold a rally, based on the open-ended responses. These responses were not reliably associated with any particular story. The vast majority of participants who detected a bias in the coverage felt that the stories disapproved of the KKK *as an organization*.

APPENDIX B: COGNITIVE PROCESSING TASKS AND OTHER MEASURES, STUDY 1

Reaction Time Task

Participants in the reaction time condition were asked to indicate whether a series of letters flashed on the computer screen formed a true English word or a nonsense word. They were instructed that both "speed" and "accuracy" were important in this task. Participants were given the opportunity to respond to two practice words (PLAIN and SLNAMFP) and then to query the experimenter if they did not understand the task. Next, participants responded to 20 words flashed on the screen in random order. These words and nonwords were as follows:

Free Speech Words:	freedom, liberty, rights, independence
Public Order Words:	violence, disorder, danger, disturbance
Filler Words:	telescope, friendly, train, planet, place, basketball
Nonwords:	plsty, dinrlsy, wiqhvtz, beirmpt, tvaxmc, molyptrzb

Importance Rating Task

Participants in the importance rating condition received the following instructions:

> We would now like to ask you a few questions about the opinions you just expressed. Different people think about different things when expressing an opinion. For example, when expressing an opinion about a political candidate, some people might think about the candidate's background and experience, while other people might think about the candidate's political party.
>
> On the next few screens you will see several thoughts or ideas that other students have expressed when describing their opinions about whether or not the Ku Klux Klan should be allowed to make speeches and hold demonstrations in public. Some of these ideas may seem important to YOU as you think about this issue, while others will seem less important. Please tell us how IMPORTANT each of these ideas is to you when you think about the question of whether or not the Ku Klux Klan should be allowed to make speeches and hold demonstrations in public.

Participants rated the following items on a seven-point scale (1 = "completely unimportant"; 7 = "extremely important").

Free Speech Items: Freedom of speech for all citizens is a fundamental American right.
Some people are interested in what the Ku Klux Klan has to say, and they have the right to listen.

Public Order Item: There is always a risk of violence and danger at Ku Klux Klan rallies.

have provided valuable information about the "default" or "baseline" levels and correlates of tolerance. As this was a project concerned with the effects of *alternative* news frames on opinion, rather than the effects of framing versus no framing, we were reluctant to assign scarce participants to a "no frame" control condition. Furthermore, it is difficult to conceive of an entirely frameless media treatment of a tolerance controversy. Nevertheless, we agree that a control group potentially could provide interesting information about which frames come closest to the manner in which people "normally" think about tolerance problems (e.g., Kuklinski et al. 1991).

[7] For example, 78.4% of participants in Study 1 strongly agreed (7 on a 1–7 scale) with the statement that "No matter what a person's political beliefs are, she or he is entitled to the same legal rights and protections as anyone else."

APPENDIX C: OPINION MEASURES, STUDY 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
F-Scale							
What young people need most of all is strict discipline by their parents.	3.6	9.9	14.4	14.4	30.6	16.7	10.4
Most people who don't get ahead just don't have enough will power.	9.5	13.5	18.5	14.0	25.7	15.3	3.6
A few strong leaders could make this country better than all the laws and talk.	12.2	16.2	20.7	19.4	15.3	13.5	2.7
An insult to your honor should never be forgotten.	15.8	20.7	19.8	17.6	11.7	5.9	8.6
Modern Racism Scale							
Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.	7.2	6.8	13.5	18.9	14.0	20.3	19.4
Over the last few years blacks have gotten less than they deserve.	14.4	18.0	22.1	20.7	10.4	9.0	5.4
It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.	12.2	15.8	23.0	20.3	13.5	9.5	5.9
Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.	9.0	9.0	14.4	13.5	24.3	16.2	13.5
Equal opportunity for blacks and whites is very important but it's not really the government's job to guarantee it.	19.4	18.9	18.0	12.2	11.3	9.9	10.4
Civil Liberties Scale							
No matter what a person's political beliefs are, she or he is entitled to the same legal rights and protections as anyone else.	.9	.9	.9	.5	6.3	12.2	78.4
When the country is in great danger we may have to force people to testify against themselves even if it violates their rights.	26.6	17.1	11.7	23.0	8.6	8.1	5.0
Any person who hides behind the laws when he or she is questioned about his or her activities does not deserve much consideration.	11.7	19.4	17.6	25.2	14.0	8.6	3.6
People should have the right to live in any neighborhood they want if they can afford it.	.5	0.0	0.0	1.4	3.2	17.6	77.5
Groups should not be prevented from holding public meetings.	3.6	1.4	6.3	7.2	11.3	32.0	38.3
Freedom of Expression Scale							
I believe in free speech for all no matter what their views might be.	2.3	4.5	4.5	7.7	9.9	29.3	41.9
People should have the freedom to express their own opinions publicly.	1.8	.5	5.0	9.5	11.7	28.8	42.8
The government should not have the right to censor published materials.	4.5	5.9	7.2	6.8	19.4	23.0	33.3
Public Order Scale	Too harshly						Not harshly enough
In general, do you think the courts deal too harshly or not harshly enough with criminals?	.9	.5	1.4	13.1	15.8	29.3	39.2
	Low priority						High priority
Do you feel that maintaining public order and discipline should be a high priority for government or a low priority?	1.8	1.8	6.3	11.3	23.9	28.8	26.1
	Support strongly						Oppose strongly
Do you support or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?	41.9	21.6	9.5	7.7	4.1	6.3	9.0
Do you support or oppose aggressive government action to protect citizens from public disruption and harassment?	12.6	17.1	25.2	18.5	12.6	7.7	6.3
Do you support or oppose the courts giving severe sentences to protesters who refuse to follow police instructions?	6.8	11.7	25.2	23.4	17.1	10.4	5.4
Do you support or oppose laws to forbid all public protest demonstrations, in the interest of public safety?	3.6	3.6	9.9	16.2	18.0	20.3	28.4

APPENDIX C: (Cont.)

Attitudes toward KKK

Below is a list of words that people use to describe political figures and groups. Please think about members of the Ku Klux Klan and enter the number for each scale that you think most accurately describes these members.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Honest						Dishonest
5.9	3.6	6.8	21.6	17.6	23.0	21.6
Bad						Good
48.2	27.0	10.4	10.4	1.8	.9	1.4
Harmless						Dangerous
.5	1.8	5.0	10.8	18.5	26.1	37.4
Trustworthy						Untrustworthy
1.4	1.8	2.3	20.7	17.6	22.1	34.2
Violent						Nonviolent
32.4	21.6	21.2	17.1	5.0	2.3	.5
Unpredictable						Predictable
14.9	12.6	10.8	19.8	14.0	15.8	12.2
Strong						Weak
5.4	8.6	18.9	22.5	15.8	19.8	9.0
Democratic						Undemocratic
4.1	1.4	5.0	21.6	12.6	18.5	36.9

Feeling Thermometer

We would now like to get your feelings about a number of groups in society. Please rate the following groups using a 1–9 "feeling thermometer." The higher the number, the warmer or more favorable you feel toward the group. The lower the number, the colder or less favorable you feel toward that group. You would given the group a "5" rating if you feel neither warm nor cold toward them.

Ku Klux Klan $\bar{X} = 2.33$
Civil Rights Leaders $\bar{X} = 6.66$

Note: With the exception of the feeling thermometer measures, results reported are percentages and may not add to 100 due to rounding error.

APPENDIX D: KKK FRAMES IN STUDY 2

Free Speech

Headline: **Ku Klux Klan Tests OSU's Commitment to Free Speech**

How far is OSU prepared to go to protect freedom of speech? The Ku Klux Klan has requested a permit to conduct a speech and rally on the Ohio State campus during the Winter Quarter of 1997. Officials and administrators will decide whether to approve or deny the request in December.

Numerous courts have ruled that the U.S. Constitution ensures that the Klan has the right to speak and hold rallies on public grounds, and that individuals have the right to hear the Klan's message if they are interested. Many of the Klan's appearances around Ohio have been marked by violent clashes between Klan supporters and counterdemonstrators who show up to protest the Klan's racist activities. In one confrontation last October in Chillicothe, Ohio, several bystanders were injured by rocks thrown by Klan supporters and protesters. Usually, a large police force is needed to control the crowds.

Opinion about the speech and rally is mixed. **Many students, faculty, and staff worry about the rally, but support the group's right to speak. Clifford Strong, a professor in the law school, remarked, "I hate the Klan, but they have the right to speak, and people have the right to hear them if they want to. We may have some concerns about the rally, but the right to speak and hear what you want takes precedence over our fears about what could happen."**

Public Order

Headline: **Possible Ku Klux Klan Rally Raises Safety Concerns**

Can campus police prevent a riot if the KKK comes to town? The Ku Klux Klan has requested a permit to conduct a speech and rally on the Ohio State campus during the Winter Quarter of 1997. Officials and administrators will decide whether to approve or deny the request in December.

Numerous courts have ruled that the U.S. Constitution ensures that the Klan has the right to speak and hold rallies on public grounds, and that individuals have the right to hear the Klan's message if they are interested. Many of the Klan's appearances around Ohio have been marked by violent clashes between Klan supporters and counterdemonstrators who show up to protest the Klan's racist activities. In one confrontation last October in Chillicothe, Ohio, several bystanders were injured by rocks thrown by Klan supporters and protesters. Usually, a large police force is needed to control the crowds.

Opinion about the speech and rally is mixed. **Many students, faculty, and staff have expressed great concern about campus safety and security during a Klan rally. Clifford Strong, a professor in the law school, remarked, "Freedom of speech is important, but so is the safety of the OSU community and the security of our campus. Considering the violence at past KKK rallies, I don't think the University has an obligation to allow this to go on. Safety must be our top priority."**

Note: Material that varied between the phrases is displayed in boldface. This material appeared in normal type in the experiment.

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