

The Heroic Framing of US Foreign Policy

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## Abstract

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This dissertation concerns the US presidential use of heroic framing in connection with foreign policy. I identify “heroic framing” as speech which describes policies in terms evoking the heroic narrative, either explicitly or implicitly through references to heroic characters. The technique of heroic framing both encourages audiences to view a situation in terms of stark moral absolutes and normalizes casualties and violence as an aspect of these heroic conflicts. This rhetorical technique thereby combines appeals to fear with elements of inspiration and reassurance. In defining heroic framing, I draw primarily on Jungian archetype, social psychology, organizational leadership and feminist international relations theory. My ultimate aim is to see whether the president's heroic framing of foreign policy heightens domestic support of and foreign attention to those policies. Extending Samuel Kernell's theory of “going public” and James Fearon's theory of audience costs, I hypothesize that presidents use heroic framing as a multivocal signal. First, presidents use heroic framing to increase domestic support for politically contentious policies. Second, by speaking forcefully about a subject in heroic terms, presidents also cue foreign leaders to the seriousness of their intentions.

To test the hypothesis that presidents use heroic framing strategically and gain greater domestic and foreign attention as a result, I employ a multi-modal research design. I first use a content-analytic, statistical approach to measure the impact of this form of presidential rhetoric on the media, on congressional action, and on public opinion polls for every month from 1981 through 2005. I then perform two historical case studies to examine the impact of the president's use of heroic imagery on domestic and foreign response to US foreign policies. Along the way to testing my main hypotheses, I use my database of the presidents’ use of heroic rhetoric to explore differences in their use of heroic imagery across individual presidents, across policy domains, in response to presidential popularity crises, and in the context of war. Through my statistical analyses, I determine that the president's use of heroic imagery does increase domestic attention to foreign policy subjects. Similarly, presidential speech patterns suggest that foreign policy targets would do well to respond to the US president's increased use of heroic framing, since it does generally signal commitment to conflict. These statistical findings of the significance of



heroic framing are supported by an examination of the cases of 1983 and 2001-2004. In 1983, Ronald Reagan's use of heroic framing for policy advocacy and for public reassurance was misinterpreted by the USSR as a signal of conflict commitment - a misperception which very nearly led to nuclear war. Meanwhile, in the period 2001-2004 George W. Bush made extensive use of heroic framing to promote the War on Terror and the Iraq War. Through an analysis of opinion polls, I determined that even after the US failed to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, Bush's intensive use of this technique led to an increase in domestic support for his Iraq War policy, which provided a critical boost to his 2004 re-election effort.

To Leigh and Duncan

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As one might imagine, the theme of the long and arduous hero's journey feels quite resonant on the path to completing a dissertation. However, just like the mythical hero, no successful grad student is ever out on their journey alone. That's especially lucky for me, since my own doctoral journey spanned a near-Odyssean nine years. My Athena and committee chair, Laura Stoker, offered critical support and encouragement during some of my darkest periods of uncertainty about my direction and abilities. My other advisors made a number of useful concrete contributions to the development of certain themes in my project. However, since my exodus to Maine took me so far off campus, many of their most important influences occurred during this project's formative stages. Performing as a GSI for Ron Hassner's War class, for example, gave me the opportunity to become well-versed in feminist writing on war as well as introducing me to Tim O'Brien and the war memoir genre. The Summer Institute in Political Psychology at Ohio State University similarly provided me with important intellectual material, helping me establish a cohesive grounding for my thinking about presidential rhetoric and public opinion. I also greatly appreciated a thought-provoking meeting with Matthew Baum during the early stages of this project's development and consultation from Henry Brady and Kevin Wallsten regarding statistical methods. A big thank you to Ali Bond, Andrea Rex, and Ryan Phillips for the assistance with filing from a distance (and to Ali also for the gift of her friendship, which was a treasured constant in my years away from campus.)

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## Chapter 1: An Introduction to Heroic Framing

A troubled and afflicted mankind looks to us, pleading for us to keep our rendezvous with destiny; that we will uphold the principles of self-reliance, self-discipline, morality and, above all, responsible liberty for every individual that we will become that shining city on a hill. (Reagan 1979)

Our war on terror is well begun, but it is only begun. This campaign may not be finished on our watch; yet, it must be and it will be waged on our watch. We can't stop short. If we stop now, leaving terror camps intact and terrorist states unchecked, our sense of security would be false and temporary. History has called America and our allies to action, and it is both our responsibility and our privilege to fight freedom's fight. (Bush 2002a)

Although aligned in political outlook, Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush had very different reputations as speakers. Reagan was known as “the Great Communicator” and was famous for his persuasive oratory. Bush, on the other hand, was known for making frequent linguistic mistakes which listeners found either endearing or infuriating.

While these presidents differed in eloquence, they nonetheless both made frequent and effective public use of a rhetorical technique I call “heroic framing.” By “heroic framing” I mean speech which identifies a contemporary political event with the heroic narrative, an ancient storytelling model found within the myths and stories of all major cultures and religions. Without even saying the word “hero” both presidents nonetheless lay out the familiar touchstones of the heroic narrative in these examples above. Both the Bush and Reagan quotation are filled with words which evoke a heroic destiny, a call to action, the requirement to perform a difficult task – perhaps at the risk of serious sacrifice – in order to achieve a transcendent boon which will benefit all humankind.

Why, like many other US presidents, did Reagan and Bush evoke the heroic narrative in this way? They did so in order to capture the attention of their audiences, to reassure them, and to persuade them about the correctness of a policy under debate. In looking at the speech of presidents over the period 1981-2005, I found presidents to frequently use heroic framing when they sought to emphasize particular priorities or to reassure a threatened public. I also found that the president could use heroic framing to increase his ability to set media agendas, as under some conditions the media paid special attention to presidential priorities when presidents used heroic framing. Finally, presidents can also use heroic framing to serve as a credible signal of their intentions to adversaries. By using heroic framing, presidents convey their serious commitment to consequential foreign policies both to domestic and international audiences.

How is it that the heroic narrative is able to play all of these roles in presidential speech? Certainly one reason lies in the comfort and familiarity of the imagery. The heroic narrative is a structure which has been used to attract and maintain audience attention for a very long time. When it is employed in political speech, we find it inspiring and elevating to listen to a speech about heroic action. References to heroism in certain situations has become so routine that in some situations it seems nearly obligatory, such as when soldiers die at war or when civilians lose their lives while serving a humanitarian cause. Presidents speak about heroes at moments of

national crisis, such as following the 9/11 attacks, in a way that makes us feel stronger and more resilient in the face of tremendously upsetting events. In short, presidents talk about heroes at moments of national sadness or crisis in order to help us feel inspired, comforted, or empowered.

However, the president's speeches are not intended merely to provide us with comfort and confidence. When presidents speak, we know they also seek to advance their own political interests. Because of the compelling nature of the heroic narrative, presidents sometimes use it in order to try to affect the public discourse around specific issues. In line with Samuel Kernell's hypothesis that presidents "go public" in order to put pressure on legislators (1997), although sophisticated political actors may not themselves be strongly affected by the president's heroic framing, heroic framing may successfully increase public interest. This increased public interest may lead to increased public pressure on legislators and thereby give presidents indirect leverage against their political opponents.

The question of whether presidents can alter public perception of a policy simply by wrapping a heroic story around it has been a subject of scholarly interest for some time. Scholars coming from the critical tradition of rhetoric and political science have long argued for the effectiveness of this presidential strategy (e.g., Kuypers 2006, Ivie 2005, Kelley 2008). Among the most influential of these proponents, Michael Rogin (1987) argued that American officials regularly employ political "demonology" to verbally transform political opposition into mythological monsters, tapping into the public's subconscious anxieties. However, critical scholars have tended to focus on individual political episodes in their analyses, making it difficult to make generalizations or make predictions for future political events. By focusing only on the most obvious examples of presidential rhetoric, these critical insights can be too easily dismissed with the claim that the individual moments they study are fundamentally *sui generis*. In my study, I provide the larger context for these investigations of specific moments. By looking at daily speech and media records from twenty-five years, I have built a much more comprehensive picture of how this kind of speech is used and received.

That said, having developed a sense of the overall range of heroic framing over the 1981-2005 period, it is possible to observe the exceptional increase in this form of rhetoric which occurred after 2001. I join the critical scholars mentioned above in noting that a full understanding of the effects of heroic framing seems particularly urgent in the wake of George W. Bush's time in office. In the 9/11 attacks and the two US wars which followed, the US experienced a period of heightened national emotion and extravagant, noteworthy presidential rhetoric. Bush's use of heroic imagery stands out as a highly memorable aspect of his public persona. From his designation of Iraq, Iran and North Korea as the "axis of evil" to his premature but dramatic announcement of "Mission Accomplished" in Iraq, Bush routinely aligned American foreign policy with the tropes from the heroic narrative. Given this increase in the presidential use of heroic framing, one must wonder: was this an effective political strategy? Was it persuasive, in the sense of creating additional support for the president and his policies?

What is the Heroic Frame?

As there are many potential ways that one could define heroic imagery and heroic

framing, I will now provide the specific definition of the heroic frame driving my analysis in this project. Both the character of the hero and the story of how he triumphs over obstacles to achieve great social benefits are widespread across global storytelling heritages. My own concept of the hero is drawn from the archetypal heroic narrative originally described by Carl Jung and later elaborated upon by Joseph Campbell in his depiction of the universal “monomyth”. Jung identified the hero as an archetype of the collective human unconscious that has existed “since time immemorial” (Jung and Hull 1977, 232). The hero is also one of the more popular archetypes, particularly in contexts shared with his adversary: “the hero's fight with the dragon, as a symbol of a typical human situation, is a very frequent mythological motif” (105). In *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (2008), Joseph Campbell used Jung's depiction of the hero to analyze world stories and create a more detailed composite of the heroic character in oral and written traditions. Campbell summarized the character of the hero as:

a personage of exceptional gifts...He and/or the world in which he finds himself suffers from a symbolical deficiency. In fairy tales this may be as slight as the lack of a certain golden ring, whereas in apocalyptic vision the physical and spiritual life of the whole earth can be represented as fallen, or on the point of falling into ruin...The hero of myth [achieves] a world-historical, macrocosmic triumph...[bringing] back from his adventure the means for the regeneration of his society as a whole. Tribal or local heroes, such as the emperor Huang Ti, Moses, or the Aztec Tezcatlipoca, commit their boons to a single folk; universal heroes – Mohammed, Jesus, Gautama Buddha – bring a message for the entire world....Popular tales represent the heroic action as physical; the higher religions show the deed to be moral; nevertheless, there will be found astonishingly little variation in the morphology of the adventure, the character roles involved, the victories gained (30).

Heroic narratives have ancient origins, appearing in many different cultures over a wide span of human history. The heroic narrative is the story of a hero facing and defeating powerful antagonists in a battle which then allows him to achieve his morally commendable goal. Using the Jungian definition of hero as a starting point, Joseph Campbell mapped the common features of heroic narratives across a wide variety of cultures and time periods. He observed that the story of the hero always took the form of describing the hero's journey to the accomplishment of a noble goal. The most central elements of the hero's journey were as follows:

The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: separation—initiation—return...A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder...fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won...the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man. (Campbell 2008: 23)

While the heroic frame centers around the concept of the hero, the hero's emergence and performance is determined by his position within the heroic narrative. Heroic narratives must

contain several set elements: an innocent victim (often a community); malevolent, threatening forces; a hero; and a noble goal or boon which will benefit society. While the specific dimensions of each of these elements change from story to story, there is enough that is constant to make them recognizable regardless of its setting.

The Hero is marked by his possession of moral and physical superiority; he puts these tools to use in combating threats too challenging for the average person to confront. His behavior is virtuous and he strives to pursue goals in manner consistent with the moral rules of his social context. In addition to the hero's explicit display of virtue, which is often demonstrated through expressions of religious belief, the hero displays his morality through several specific qualities: courage, or a willingness to continue towards his goals in the face of frightening obstacles; selflessness, or a transcendent orientation to the social collective rather than to his own immediate benefit; and determination, or a willingness to persevere towards his goals despite having an exhausting number of obstacles to overcome on the way. In addition to possessing these morally superior attributes, the hero is associated with superlative physicality – particularly physical strength, a willingness to fight, and maleness or masculinity.

While these qualities exist inherently in the hero, they usually lie dormant at the beginning of the heroic narrative. The hero in everyday life does not necessarily show his moral or physical superiority; rather, he requires a “call to action” to have a reason to discover and demonstrate his innate heroic characteristics. At a moment when the hero's community experiences a threat, the hero steps forward and assumes risk on behalf of the community, demonstrating his ability to choose the morally correct social benefit over the personal advantage of individual safety. Just as the hero's morality is called out by the recognition of a threat to his community, the hero's physical superiority is similarly evoked by an encounter with a superior threat. The malevolence of the hero's antagonists call the hero's willingness to fight into being; the battle with these villains reveals his physical strength and fighting skill. This willingness to fight sometimes creates unfortunate conflicts for the hero in that heroic characters sometimes deploy their aggression in ways that can unintentionally harm innocent people. In the context of heroic myth, such as when the Greek hero Hercules was forced to perform twelve labors to atone for having killed his own family in a fit of madness, these missteps often form part of the hero's struggle with his own human imperfection. Similarly, while Max Weber and others describe a hyper-violent “charismatic madness” as a normal state for heroes, this state contrasts sharply with the “laws of war” tradition and modern notions of humanitarian protection. Nonetheless, the mythology of the unrestrained, blood-thirsty hero remains a powerful, if publicly unacknowledged, sub-current in the heroic model.<sup>1</sup>

The hero's story inevitably contains two other classes of people: villains and victims. Villains are the negative image of heroes. In their idealization, they possess the opposite qualities of the hero: where heroes are morally good, villains are evil; where heroes are courageous, villains are cowardly, where heroes are selfless, villains are selfish; where heroes are determined,

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Elshtain (1995), for example, describes Rambo somewhat in these terms: Rambo “is on a *rescue* mission; to save Americans missing in action, he must kill. But one gets the feeling that Rambo doesn't so much kill to rescue as he rescues to kill” (196, *n.*).



villains are dilettantish and easily distracted. Finally, while heroes are physically strong, villains are physically weak (although they do generally have powerful henchmen.) The fact of their physical weakness points to a certain ambiguity in villains' gendering. Their physical weakness aligns them with popular images of femininity, yet the fact that they must be appropriate targets for physical combat means that they must be at least partially masculine. The Jungian reading of the villain (or Dragon, in Jung's terminology) holds that the Dragon is also the Terrible Mother: the villain is a projection of childhood fears of and conflict with the all-powerful maternal figure (Jung and Hull 1977). More clearly, however, the significance of masculinity for heroism means that the inverse of the hero must in some meaningful way be *not* manly. While the villain is powerful, and thus in some way rendered as masculine, the villain is also secretly weak and vulnerable, and thus rendered female.<sup>2</sup>

Victims, meanwhile, are less ambiguously gendered female. Victims are people who are primarily characterized by their inability to take care of themselves. Subject to the villain's actual or prospective violence, victims are helpless to stop the violence and are thus identified by their passivity or ineffectual self-help efforts. However, while victims are weak, they are also morally virtuous, and it is this combination of the victim's moral strength and physical weakness which provides the logic which motivates heroic action. If victims were physically strong they could defend themselves, while if victims were immoral they would deserve the villain's violence. However, in the victims' circumstance of not deserving violence and yet being too weak to resist it, a hero provides the necessary physical strength to repel the undeserved violence. The combination of virtue and weakness also functions – in line with traditional cultural associations between womanhood, goodness and passivity – to create a specifically feminine image of victimhood. The feminization of victimhood is routinely supported through references to the threatened community as being full of “women and children” or through the depiction of frightened female victims.

Overall, the heroic frame is characterized by strong, morally-evocative and absolute assessments of the people and options present in a particular political situation. To some extent, heroic framing is identifiable in the starkness of the terms in which a speaker describes an issue. Heroic stories have only one potential positive resolution; there is no range of acceptable compromises and witnessing incremental movement towards a goal is little better than failure. Heroic imagery is also evident in characterizations of political situation which have a clear final scenario for the issue at hand – an “end of history” (Fukuyama 1992), if you will – as if we could almost envision a “happily ever after” written across history's last page. Heroic imagery substitutes charismatic action and individual responsibility for bureaucratic or collective process in its depictions of human political behavior. As such, heroic imagery tends not to accurately reflect the world of political action, but it has a more complicated relationship to political

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<sup>2</sup> For more on political imagery of demonic, emasculating mothers, see Rogin (1987), particularly the essay entitled “Kiss Me Deadly: Communism, Motherhood, and Cold War Movies” (236-271). Rogin argues that political “demonology” – the splitting of the world in two, “attributing magical, subversive power to a conspiratorial center of evil” (xiii) – relies heavily on negative fantasies of the early mother, while the political leader who can prevail against representations of her hidden, anarchic power constitutes the “countersubversive” hero.

intention and the investment of meaning into political action.

## Key Findings

Over the course of my dissertation, I examined the variation and effects of presidential references to this narrative. I developed a keyword dictionary which tracked the presidents' use of words which I identified as evoking heroic imagery, and found that presidents use heroic framing more often in connection with foreign policy than domestic policy. Presidents also tend to wait until their second year in office to deploy larger amounts of heroic framing in their speech, which may result from the general tendency among US presidents to spend their first year in office focused primarily on domestic policy rather than foreign policy. In examining the effects of heroic framing on presidential approval, I was surprised to find that increases in presidential use of heroic imagery in State of the Union address were associated with a decrease in presidential popularity following the address, a result which belies the more common belief that heroic language increases audience perception of a speaker's charisma (Merolla et al 2007). Nonetheless, I found that presidents reliably used more heroic framing in connection with public addresses and with their foreign policy priorities.

So if the president's use of heroic framing does not produce an increase in the public's approval of the president, why does he use it? I theorized that presidents typically use heroic framing in two main situations: when they seek to increase the degree of importance associated with an issue and when they need to comfort the American public after a threatening event. These two uses for heroic framing reflect the plural roles every president must play. The president is the nation's unified representative, and he is therefore charged with providing the nation with an authoritative interpretation of world events. When confusing or threatening things happen in the world, the president is the nation's "interpreter-in-chief" (Stuckey 1991) and he uses heroic framing in order to restore a sense of order, predictability and hope. Meanwhile, the president is also a politician who's power relies heavily on his rhetorical skill – on his "power to persuade" (Neustadt 1991) – and heroic framing is one of the tools he uses to convince others to support his political positions. I distinguish these uses by calling the president's use of heroic framing "ceremonial" when he uses it to reassure the public following a threatening or upsetting event and "persuasive" when he uses it to advocate for a particular policy.

Since heroic framing is used for distinct purposes, we should expect that the president would seek different effects depending on the intention underlying its use. When the president uses heroic framing in a ceremonial context, he is likely to be seeking to reassure and encourage the public. When the president uses heroic framing in a persuasive context, he is likely to be seeking support for a new policy. Looking at the predictive causes of presidential heroic framing, I found evidence to support these separate uses. I illustrated the ceremonial use of heroic framing by confirming that presidents were more likely to use heroic framing when discussing death. Speeches for memorial events and speeches in which the president mentions loss of life generally contain substantial heroic framing. In terms of the persuasive use of heroic framing, meanwhile, I compared US-initiated conflicts with US conflicts initiated by another state. I observed that US presidents were likely to use more than average heroic framing in the month before initiating

conflict with other states, but likely to use less than average heroic framing in the month before other states initiated conflict with the US. This suggests that presidents actively chose to use heroic framing to persuade the public of the value of going to war before initiating a conflict. I also looked at the use of presidential heroic framing in the politics of foreign aid. Overall, the president's decision to use a significant amount of heroic framing in connection with a state was a better predictor of foreign aid for that state in the following fiscal year than was the frequency with which the president simply mentioned the state. Since we can assume that increases in foreign aid occurred at least partly in connection with presidential persuasion, this suggests that heroic framing was part of the persuasive effort.

I next looked for effects of heroic framing, particularly in the domestic media response to this form of presidential rhetoric. In order for presidents to effectively achieve a persuasive or ceremonial public effect through heroic framing, they must be able to affect media coverage. One challenge I discovered while evaluating the president's media agenda-setting power is that the president is often able to set foreign policy media agendas simply by mentioning a country, particularly when the country is less well-known to the public. In these cases, it doesn't matter as much whether the president uses heroic framing or not since any speech is more likely to increase media attention. However, I found that presidents often could use heroic framing to further increase media coverage under particular circumstances. When a country is already publicly salient, the president's use of heroic framing in connection with that country may further increase media coverage. Further, when the US has been to war with a country, the president's use of heroic framing predicts an increase in media coverage. I looked in closer detail at six pre-war periods and found that in the months immediately preceding US involvement in war, speeches in which the president used significant amounts of heroic rhetoric were much more likely to predict an increase in media coverage, while speeches during that period with less heroic rhetoric predicted a lower or no increase in media coverage.

Given that presidential heroic framing was particularly likely to have an agenda-setting effect in the pre-conflict period, there is ample reason to believe that it presidential heroic framing functions as a method of signaling belligerent presidential intent to foreign adversaries. I therefore looked into some of the foreign effects of presidential heroic framing. While I examined just one foreign relationship during one year – the US-Soviet relationship during 1983 – this case illustrated an interesting possibility I had theorized might occur when presidents used heroic framing. Empirically, the president's ceremonial use of heroic framing should not be interpreted as a signal, since ceremonial speech is not linked to an effort to gain support for a new policy. Persuasive uses of heroic framing, however, could legitimately be interpreted as a signals of belligerent intent, since they represent an effort to create support for a potentially hostile foreign policy. Since presidents use heroic framing both for ceremonial and persuasive purposes, it would be possible that a ceremonial use of heroic framing would be misinterpreted as a signal of an intention to escalate hostilities. In 1983, it appears likely that this very thing occurred, when the US response to the Soviet shutdown of Korean Airlines Flight 007 led the Soviets to expect a nuclear attack.

Finally, I returned to a consideration of the domestic effects of heroic framing by looking at George W. Bush's use of heroic framing in connection with the War on Iraq. Since this period was marked by extensive opinion polling, it was more possible than usual to document the

effects of presidential rhetoric on public opinion. I found that Bush's heroic framing of the conflict was extremely successful in leading people to support the war, proving to be an effective persuasive technique even after the material rationale for the war was shown to be false. The effectiveness of his use of heroic framing in this context may have even helped him win re-election. I show how the timing of his increased use of heroic framing in connection with Iraq paralleled an increase in his general electoral support at a critical point during his campaign.

Although Bush was an especially enthusiastic and successful practitioner of heroic framing, he was far from alone in employing it. All US presidents use this technique from time to time. However, presidents use heroic framing for several different reasons, which must be individually distinguished in order to understand a) the president's intention in using this rhetoric; b) the likelihood that the president will achieve the immediate effects he desires; and c) whether or not there might be unintended consequences from the president's use of heroic framing.

### Investigating the Heroic Frame

As I reviewed, in my dissertation I investigate the incidence and effects of the president's use of heroic imagery. In Chapter Two, I review literatures which touch on the question of why presidents use this type of imagery. While the image of the hero is a potent and accessible archetype, foreign policy scholars have not often focused on what benefits political leaders reap through their use of heroic imagery. Nonetheless, there are many other relevant scholarly traditions which have probed this phenomenon. Scholars examining charisma, for example, describe how leaders gain increased influence when their followers see them as having near-supernatural heroic abilities – a quality influenced by leaders' choice of rhetoric. The literature on authoritarianism identifies individual personality traits which lead some people to become more attracted to leaders who use simplified, heroic language. Feminist and critical scholars have examined how elite portrayals of the masculinized warrior-hero have been used to mobilize armies, suppress opposition, and reify existing power relations within the state. From other vantage points within international relations, scholars have examined the role of enemy images in foreign policy and the function of dehumanizing outside groups as a method of enhancing group self-esteem. Finally, the special role occupied by the president within the American political system rewards him on the basis of his rhetorical performance. While heroic framing is something presidents are likely to find themselves sometimes required to provide – as a form of national comfort during stressful moments – it is equally likely that presidents make political use of the fact that they enjoy a unique degree of credibility with regard to their heroic framing of foreign policy subjects.

In Chapter Three I develop an operational definition of heroic framing for use in testing my hypotheses about the effects stemming from this strategy. My first step is to formulate a keyword dictionary for the computer-assisted identification of speeches high in heroic imagery, resulting in a list of words I term "heroic rhetoric." Then, I define the corpus of presidential speeches used to determine how presidents have employed heroic rhetoric over time. My study covers the period 1981 to 2005, with measurements of my variables at the daily level. While this

time period was chosen mainly on the basis of data availability, it is suitable for testing a number of hypotheses as it encompasses the tenure of four presidents, periods of governmental control by both parties, a number of major military conflicts, equivalent periods during and following the Cold War and a range of economic conditions. While it would certainly be optimal to make my study even longer in duration, the 1981-2005 period represents a longer-term look at daily-level presidential speech than any other study of which I am aware. Once I have developed a picture of the use of heroic rhetoric over time, I test some basic hypotheses about why presidents may choose to use it. In particular, I examine whether the presidents' use of heroic rhetoric appears to increase their popularity – in line with the expectations of the charisma literature – or whether heroic rhetoric instead appears to be used for the purposes of persuading audiences of the merits of a particular policy.

Before proceeding with my examination of the reasons for and effects of heroic rhetoric, I next review the foreign policy subjects of heroic framing. In Chapter Four I examine which individual countries are the most frequent *dramatis personae* in the president's heroic framing, the countries (or leaders, or populations) which occupy the roles of villains and victims relative to the home country's heroes. I examine the frequency with which presidents mention all countries over the period 1981 to 2005 to understand which countries are most likely to have been the subject of heroic framing. I then track the presidents' use of heroic framing in the case of each of the most significant foreign policy subjects.

Using this filter of especially significant countries, I can develop a clearer picture of the presidential use of heroic rhetoric in important foreign policy moments. In Chapter Five I refine my hypotheses about the presidential use of heroic rhetoric through examining the “whys and why nots” of the presidential use of heroic rhetoric. In particular, I look at presidential rhetorical choices in two key contexts. I expect to see presidents use more heroic rhetoric in the context of their preferred policies and I also expect presidents to use more heroic rhetoric when American audiences feel upset or threatened, in order to provide a sense of meaning and comfort to the national audience. I test each of these hypotheses in several ways. First, I look at the president's use of heroic imagery in the context of the literature on signaling through comparing heroic rhetoric with two other ways presidents could be seen to have developed audience costs. I look again at how heroic rhetoric reflects presidential prioritization by comparing the presidential use of heroic rhetoric in connection with individual countries with Congress's provision of foreign aid to those countries in the following fiscal year. Turning then to my hypothesis that presidents use heroic imagery in order to comfort a threatened or grieving public, I look at the presidential use of heroic rhetoric in memorial speeches by comparing average presidential speech, presidential speech which references an accident or disaster in which no Americans died, and presidential speech referencing accidents or disasters in which Americans died. Finally, as a method of teasing out the differences between the use of heroic framing as a persuasive device and the use of heroic framing as a comforting response to unexpected threat, I compare patterns in the presidential use of heroic rhetoric when the US initiates a military conflict with patterns in the presidential use of heroic rhetoric when another state initiates a conflict.

With my observations on presidential use of heroic framing in hand, I next turn to the process of testing for any regular effects of this framing on relevant outcomes with regard to foreign policymaking. Maxwell McCombs and his colleagues (1997) observe that the possibility



of framing effects relies on the pre-existence of issue salience. In Chapter Six, I test the possibility that the presidents' use of heroic framing enhances his agenda-setting ability in the realm of foreign policy – that is, does heroic framing increase the attention that American media outlets pay to the countries the president mentions. I evaluate whether key contexts like war or the national salience of a foreign policy subject affects the agenda-setting power of presidential heroic framing. To see whether the effect of the president's speech – either directly or as mediated by national media attention – changes the degree of Congressional attention to an issue, I then measure the direct effect of presidential use of heroic rhetoric and the effect of media attention on Congressional activity around particular countries. In order to account for the internal dependencies present in these time-series, I model these relationships using the technique of vector auto-regression (VAR).

In Chapter Seven, I tie my previous chapters together through an examination of heroic framing in context. In particular, I look at how presidents can use heroic framing as a tool of domestic persuasion or a tool of domestic reassurance, and how it that while the president's use of heroic framing can be intended primarily for domestic consumption, it is always also operating as an international signal. I found that the year 1983 contained an excellent opportunity to study all of these elements. In February and March, Reagan began promoting the new Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), which was quickly given the dramatic nickname "Star Wars" for its fantastical, science fiction-like qualities. The rollout of SDI involved a substantial shift in presidential rhetorical tone, including Reagan's delivery of the famous "Evil Empire" speech. The second event, in September, concerned a Soviet attack on a civilian flight which had originated from the US. Soviet soldiers, mistaking the passenger plane for a spy craft as it flew into a sensitive military area, killed 269 civilians when shooting the plane down. Reagan's verbal response to the shutdown framed the event as an unequivocal example of Soviet villainy, describing the Soviets as soulless monsters who shot down the plane merely for the pleasure of killing innocent civilians. While neither of these incidents involved Reagan issuing a clear statement of threat to the Soviets, the cumulative effect of his language increased the perception by Soviet leaders that the US was on the verge of attacking. When an annual military exercise held in Europe followed these events, Soviet leadership believed that the exercise might be a cover for an actual nuclear attack on the Soviet Union. Since the Soviets themselves had a plan for a preemptive first strike under conditions of imminent nuclear attack, nuclear war very nearly began.

In the case of 1983, the only thing that prevented an outbreak of war was the fact that both sides had many years of experience of reading one another's signals. This experience included joint knowledge of a history of misunderstandings and led them to understand that verbal signals could be unreliable and required additional confirmation. In the case of this particular bilateral relationship, therefore, an exceptional amount of resources had been invested in redundant information systems which could be used to determine the authenticity of any apparent threat. Happily, in the case of both the US and the Soviet Union, those redundant intelligence systems revealed that there was insufficient physical evidence of mobilization for war to back up the verbal signals, and the nuclear exercise was eventually correctly interpreted by the Soviets to be merely an exercise.

In my final chapter, I returned to the subject which sparked my interest in heroic framing by examining George W. Bush's use of heroic imagery in connection with Iraq. I document how Bush transitioned from a ceremonial use of heroic framing after the September 11 attacks to a persuasive heroic framing of a large-scale program called the War on Terror. Like other abstract "wars" – such as the War on Poverty or the War on Crime – the "War on Terror" title described a large moral consensus which provided a sense of legitimacy to discrete concrete policies. Once Bush effectively positioned Iraq within the heroic War on Terror frame by pointing to Saddam Hussein's possession of weapons of mass destruction, Bush was able to identify war on Iraq as an appropriate specific element of the overall War on Terror and thereby gain support for it.

After exploring the development of these frames and looking at the initial public response to them, I sought to discover how the heavy use of heroic framing might affect the president politically over the long term. I was particularly interested in trends during the presidential election year of 2004. Moreover, not only was 2004 a test for American voters' global assessment of the president, but it was also a year in which many of Bush's assertions about the heroic nature of the war in Iraq – including Saddam Hussein's possession of WMD – were discovered to be false.

Unexpectedly, what I discovered when looking at Bush's speeches is that he dramatically increased his use of heroic framing in connection with Iraq after this discovery. Rather than suffering for this apparent disconnect, Bush's increased use of heroic framing corresponded with a brief increase in public support for the Iraq War. The particular timing of this change came at a crucial pre-election moment when Bush had been sliding downward in public approval. The increase in support for the Iraq War which Bush appears to have achieved solely through his use of heroic framing helped increase his support among voters in time for the presidential election.

Bush's successful deployment of heroic framing provides a fitting coda for this project. By demonstrating the persuasive power of heroic framing in the face of contradictory factual evidence, Bush shows the deep potential for persuasive arguments made through adherence to a heroic narrative. Despite material evidence, people are attracted to the emotional resonance – the different kind of truth – which exists within the heroic frame.

## Chapter 2: The Mechanics of Heroic Framing

Given the country's mood by the end of the Carter administration, Ronald Reagan's main task was to restore in the American people a sense of control over their lives and the world. He chose to do this through storytelling. The plot was simple: Find the villain, and eliminate him. Reagan played both the hero, who promised to slay the villain, and the narrator, who told us who the real villains were, and whether or not the hero had done his job. (Stuckey 1991, 114)

My particular construction of the heroic frame and evaluation of its use in the context of presidential speech are novel. However, the ideas that I bring together through this construct have not only been explored in a variety of different academic literatures but are founded on the premise that the ancient heroic narrative continues to be relevant in contemporary politics. In the previous chapter I reviewed what I consider to be the fundamental observation underlying this project: the fact that people all over the world have been telling very similar stories about a similar set of characters, following a similar narrative trajectory, for a very long time. This project thus represents an effort to tell the story of this story in one aspect of modern political life.

Meanwhile, there are a number of different research programs into leadership, international relations, and political communication which helped flesh out my reasoning behind my particular construction of this project. Given my interest in knowing why the president might evoke the heroic narrative in public speech, I looked at literatures on charismatic and authoritarian leadership dynamics, the effect of threat on public preferences, social psychological phenomena which might affect public discourse about foreign policy, and studies of the American presidency with a particular focus on presidential rhetoric. To understand what kind of domestic effects the president's heroic frame might have, I looked at the literature on political communication effects. Finally, I considered that the president's use of heroic framing might be intended for international audiences, and to develop hypotheses around this point I turned to the literature on rational war and international signaling.

### Charisma, Authoritarianism, and Threat

The charismatic leadership and authoritarian personality literatures have a natural affinity for research into the effects of heroic framing since the leader in these models already embodies much of the heroic ideal to his or her followers. Charismatic and authoritarian leader/follower dynamics foresee an intense mutuality, yet extreme power imbalance, between an elevated leader and a group of passionate followers. This relationship is reflected in the heroic narrative itself, which invokes both a hero and a community in need of rescue; interestingly, it is also mirrored in the dynamic existing between a magnetic storyteller and an attentive audience. Scholars have found that situations in which leaders are perceived as charismatic or where audiences express authoritarian tendencies seem to correspond to the increased use and enjoyment of heroic imagery.



The concept of heroism, in fact, is uniquely intertwined with the concept of charisma. Charisma, as classically defined by Max Weber (1978), is “a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional qualities” (241). More succinctly, James MacGregor Burns (1982) notes that charisma is “the endowment of divine grace”(243). These wordings come very close to Jungian descriptions of the archetypal hero. Charisma is popularly understood to mean the quality of magnetic attractiveness projected by individuals possessing this trait; in a leader, it is viewed as an important resource which can be used to further the achievement of the leader’s policy goals. However, just as the archetypal hero is not known as a hero until he is called into action, charisma does not rest solely on inborn personal qualities. Charisma is endowed through the leader’s rising to the needs of followers: the charismatic leader’s “divine mission must prove itself by bringing well-being to his faithful followers; if they do not fare well, he is obviously not the god-sent master” (Weber 1978, 1114).

The charismatic leadership construct has evolved from Weber’s original formulation to a modern-day application within the organizational behavior scholarship. Burns’ development of a distinction between “transactional” and “transforming” leadership styles provided a way to narrow Weber’s expansive definition of charisma into something more useful for the empirical study of leadership. According to Burns, transforming leadership

occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality...transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both (Burns 1978, 21).

Like the charismatic leader, the transforming leader operates at a level that brings the leader-follower relationship beyond the strictly rational, “transactional” realm of organizing collective behavior towards the accomplishment of joint goals. The transforming leader elevates the collective action around a particular subject to the status of a moral problem, and in so doing creates an aura of momentous significance to the action. Typically, Burns notes, when individuals think of transforming leadership, they think of ““great men’...various versions of this theory have long been popular in folklore, with its imputation of mythic, transforming power to kings, princes, warriors, and various demigods within and outside the mortal realm” (51). However, Burns sought to ‘dethrone’ the power of charisma through his transforming leadership model. To Burns, transforming leadership can occur at many different organizational levels.

House and Atidya (1997), in identifying a group of modern-day scholars, described this perspective initiated by Burns as “the neocharismatic leadership paradigm.” House and Aditya noted that scholars in this paradigm:

all attempt to explain how leaders are able to lead organizations to attain outstanding accomplishments such as the founding and growing of successful entrepreneurial firms, corporate turnarounds in the face of overwhelming competition, military victories in the face of superior forces...Second, the theories of this paradigm also attempt to explain how

certain leaders are able to achieve extraordinary levels of follower motivation, admiration, respect, trust, commitment, dedication, loyalty and performance. Third, they stress symbolic and emotionally appealing leader behaviors, such as visionary, frame alignment, empowering, role modeling, image building, exceptional, risk-taking and supportive behaviors...Finally, the leader effects specified in these theories include follower self-esteem, motive arousal and emotions, and identification with the leader's vision...as well as the traditional dependent values of earlier leadership theories: follower satisfaction and performance. (440)

These characteristics defining the “neocharismatic leader” act as a way to understand the role of heroic imagery in the world of everyday intra-organizational relations. The charismatic leader is the exceptional and extraordinarily “gifted” individual in the context of the modern business organization.

However, not only is the charismatic leader an embodiment of the heroic image, but he or she may be more likely to make references to heroic imagery as a way of being perceived as charismatic. A number of scholars have investigated the power of rhetoric to increase an audience's perception of the speaker's charisma (House and Shamir 1993, Bligh et al 2004). These scholars have theorized that individuals are perceived to be more charismatic when they increase the number of references to collective values, morals, distal rather than proximal goals, and unity of identity with followers (Shamir et al 1994). This collection of rhetorical regularities shares a number of features with heroic framing, suggesting that heroic framing may also contribute to national perception of presidential charisma. One imagines that the president's use of heroic imagery reflects back upon him; when the president speaks about American heroism, as America's nationally-chosen representative he enjoys some of the heroic attribution. In this sense, charisma captures the notion of the positive affect audiences develop towards speakers who inspire them. Indeed, charismatic leaders are described as being appealing for the very reason that they have the ability “to wake us up to our own potentialities” (Ladkin 2006, 177) through inspiring their followers. By helping followers feel powerful through their verbal performance, the leader produces a sense of strength and pride in their followers. This feeling may then be transformed into increased popular approval of the leader.

This relationship can be viewed similarly, if more negatively, through the lens of the authoritarian personality research program. Scholars in this tradition study the problem whereby followers come to see leaders as superhuman and seek to follow them into aggressive and violent behavior towards externalized group members or other designated enemies. In general, the scholarship on authoritarian personalities investigates qualities of followers which make them more likely to seek and obey leaders who evoke heroic qualities of strength, righteous aggression, and morality. For researchers into the “authoritarian personality,” it was the willingness of followers to invest heroic leaders with absolute power which led to the horrors of fascism and World War II.

The authoritarian personality research program developed a measure of personality traits that was known as the Fascism (or F) scale, which surveyed a set of dispositional and historical facts about individuals to determine whether they were likely to support fascist or authoritarian leaders (Adorno et al 1993). Theodor Adorno and his colleagues believed that the predisposition

to follow authoritarian leaders resulted from a restrictive style of parenting, in which parents severely punished children's failure to adhere to conventional social norms.<sup>3</sup> The group identified nine dimensions that they argued together represented essential aspects of the authoritarian personality: conventionalism, submission to authority figures, aggression towards nonconformists, "anti-intraception" – a rejection of "feelings, fantasies, speculations, aspirations," superstition and stereotype, the high valuation of power and toughness, destructiveness and cynicism, projectivity – or a tendency to project their own unacceptable feelings onto others, and an excessive concern with others' sexuality.

The authoritarianism program was revived in the 1980s primarily by Robert Altemeyer (1988). Altemeyer's Right-Wing Authoritarianism construct used only three elements from the original F-scale group: conventionalism, submission to authority figures and aggression towards non-conformists. Altemeyer's theory posits:

Those high in right-wing authoritarianism have greater difficulty than low scorers in engaging in critical thinking. They are more likely to agree with a statement of fact without examining it critically....therefore, when a scapegoat is selected upon whom a country's problems are placed, people high in right-wing authoritarianism are more likely to uncritically believe that the scapegoat is responsible. It follows, then that a second pattern of thinking among those high in right-wing authoritarianism is the acceptance of contradictory ideas and an ability to compartmentalize them, thereby ignoring the contradictions. Any idea that comes from an authority figure is accepted as correct, even it is in direct contradiction to another idea. Third...those high in right-wing authoritarianism see the world as a very dangerous place...the resulting fear drives much of their aggression, and this makes them vulnerable to precisely the kind of overstated, emotional, and dangerous assertions a demagogue could make...Finally...high authoritarians are particularly susceptible to the fundamental attribution error wherein people attribute the behavior of others to internal dispositions and their own behavior to external forces. (Cottam et al 2004, 25.)

In this review, it is easy to see connections between Altemeyer's RWA construct and the presidential use of heroic imagery. It is easy to imagine that the person high in RWA – who is more likely to be credulous of any authoritative statement – would be particularly appreciative of a story that identifies a clear villain, provides an opportunity to exercise righteous aggression

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<sup>3</sup> Adorno's argument about the political consequences of highly-punitive parenting styles has a latter-day echo in the work of George Lakoff (2002) on the differences in the "parenthood metaphors" used by American liberals and conservatives in conceptualizing the appropriate role of the government. Lakoff theorizes that conservatives experienced – and therefore support – parenthood primarily as a source of discipline, while liberals experienced – and therefore support – parenthood primarily as a source of nurturance. These experiences then have implications for how people envision the state "parenting" or being responsible for its citizens. Barker and Tinnick (2006) demonstrated that an operationalized version of Lakoff's formulation does an effective job of predicting ideological orientation.

against a villain, and asserts the black-and-white moral necessity of this sort of action, all of which is characteristic of the heroic narrative (given that the villain simply “is” evil, while the domestic state is put in the unfortunate situation of being forced to respond to that evil.) In fact, given that the study of authoritarianism concerns the desires of followers much more than the qualities of leaders, this literature suggests that heroic imagery may be sought by followers from their leaders as much as leaders use it as a persuasive tactic. If authoritarian followers have a psychological need for certainty, scapegoating, and a preference for aggressive solutions to problems, then these followers may very well demand a heroic narrative from their leader to describe the universe they inhabit.

Understanding the role played by threat in the use of heroic imagery may also turn out to be critical. The literature on authoritarian personalities and charismatic leadership have a number of clear points of contact, but the clearest may be the fact that both the perception of charisma and the emergence of authoritarian tendencies appear to be moderated by threat. Just as scholars associate charismatic leaders with times of crisis, some scholars believe that the authoritarian orientation is, at its foundation, mainly an excessive response to threat, in which the fundamental authoritarian goals of social order and security are “generated by a view of the social world as [being perpetually] dangerous and threatening” (Duckitt 2006, 685).

Many scholars see crisis as providing a major basis for perceptions of charisma. Ann Willner summarizes the elements which many scholars believe lead to a popular perception of political charisma as being: 1) a crisis situation, 2) potential followers in distress, and 3) an aspirant leader with 4) a doctrine promoting deliverance (Willner 1984, 43). Current empirical studies have borne out the positive relationship between crisis and citizens’ perception of political leaders’ charisma (Pillai 1996, Merolla et al 2007, Bligh et al 2004; see Pillai and Meindl 1998 for an opposing perspective). Madsen and Snow (1991) attribute the connection between crisis and charisma to the psychological desire on the part of the followers to achieve mastery of the social crisis. Faced with a sense of their own inability to cope with the crisis, they enhance their sense of self-efficacy by creating what Madsen and Snow identify as “proxy control,” in line with Bandura’s theory of self-efficacy.<sup>4</sup> In other words, by identifying someone who appears capable of dealing with the overwhelming situation of social collapse, individuals can regain a sense of control by allowing that capable individual to direct their behavior. The feeling of having a redeveloped means of control creates such a strong feeling of relief in the follower that they develop an extremely positive view of the charismatic leader. Madsen and

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<sup>4</sup> Specifically, Bandura’s theory describes the relationship between fear, acceptance of proxy control, and a continued condition of helplessness: “In many areas of life, individuals do not have direct control over the institutional mechanisms of change and therefore must turn to proxy control to alter their lives for the better. All too often, however, people surrender control to intermediaries in areas over which they do have some direct influence. They choose not to exercise direct control because they have not developed the means to do so, they believe others can do it better, or they do not want to saddle themselves with the onerous responsibilities that personal control entails...A low sense of efficacy fosters dependence on proxy control, which further reduces opportunities to build the skills needed for efficacious action” (Bandura 2007, 19).

Snow also review the literature which connects the experience of following a charismatic leader to the experience of religious conversion or “salvation” – the experience of being part of a community of people who are saved by a heroic figure.

The literature on authoritarian personalities features similar observations on the critical role of situational crisis in mediating the expression of authoritarian dispositions. While authoritarian tendencies (such as those elicited through measures of right-wing authoritarianism) are often measured as stable features of individual personalities, many scholars now agree that authoritarian tendencies should instead be measured as a predisposition to behave in line with authoritarian expectations under conditions of threat (Lavine et al 2002, Feldman and Stenner 1997, Winter 1996). Multiple studies have demonstrated the greater expression of authoritarian tendencies (particularly authoritarian aggression) under conditions of threat (Stenner 2005; Lavine et al 1999, 2005; McFarland 2005; Crowson et al 2006, Doty et al 1997). With regard to specific policies, Huddy et al (2005) found that individuals who perceived the most threat after the September 11 attacks were most likely to desire to retaliate against foreign targets, restrict the rights of Arab-Americans, and curtail immigration, and that perception of threat was significantly moderated by the respondent’s authoritarian tendencies.<sup>5</sup>

The heightened perceptions of charisma and the intensified needs of authoritarian individuals suggest that crisis periods will correspond to the greater effectiveness of – and perhaps greater follower demand for – heroic imagery. The kind of media narratives that emerge during periods of threat, and which are likely to be attractive to audiences with authoritarian tendencies, have been demonstrated to share many features with the heroic narrative. In an influential article, Stephen Sales (1973) compared the rates of a variety of Depression-era social phenomena with their rates a decade earlier in order to examine the effects of social crisis on manifestations of authoritarian tendencies. One of the dimensions tested by Sales was the emergence of comic books with themes of power or toughness. Sales and a separate coder found that, relative to the pre-Depression 1920s, six times as many comic strips emerged in the Depression-era 1930s in which the main character was either physically powerful or controlled great power (Sales 1973, 46). These 1930s comic strips comprised many classic American representations of serial heroic narratives, including Superman, the Lone Ranger, Prince Valiant, Dick Tracy and Flash Gordon.<sup>6</sup> Sales used the growth of these representations of heroism in

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<sup>5</sup> A similar relationship between perceived threat and support for conflict-escalating policies was found in the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict (and in the context of resource conflicts between religious and secular Jews) by Gordon and Arian (2001). Meanwhile, the inverse of this theoretical connection between threat and authoritarian dispositions has also been demonstrated: individuals who score low on authoritarian measures tend to support greater civil rights and individual autonomy under conditions of social threat (Stenner 2005).

<sup>6</sup> This list of comic strips begun in the 1930s include both mentions from Sales (1973) and additional comics from Young and Young (2002). Among these comic strips are a number of fusions between fictional superheroes and non-fictional US military units, which emphasize the deep alliance between real military activities and imagined heroic stories. For example, Young and Young mention “Terry and the Pirates,” a classic representative of the comic heroic narrative



popular literature to demonstrate an increase in expressions of authoritarianism under social threat.

Other studies provide further support for the relationship between heroic imagery, authoritarianism, and periods of social crisis. Richard Doty and his colleagues (1991) replicated Sales' archival method for comparing expressions of authoritarianism during high and low threat periods the 1970s and 1980s. Among other tests, Doty et al investigated patterns of television shows portraying characters who were physically powerful or controlled a great power. Similarly to Sales, they found an increase in these shows during periods of high threat and decrease during periods of low threat.<sup>7</sup> Thus, much as the perception of heroic charisma in a leader may be mediated by a need to feel some form of control in a crisis (if only "proxy control"), social crises may precipitate a greater interest in identifying with physically powerful heroes in stories. Meanwhile, Bill Peterson and Emily Gerstein (2005) returned to Sales' focus on comic books and performed a content analysis of comics produced during periods of high and low social threat. Peterson and Gerstein emphasized the significance of heroic imagery for signaling a rise in authoritarian expression:

As it turns out, the superhero genre might be particularly well suited for assessing the threat-authoritarian link because of its clear focus on themes of good and evil. Authoritarian psychology is drawn to such unambiguous distinctions; under threat, comics might reflect a similar desire for such clarity. We hypothesize that comic books published during times of high societal or economic threat should contain more authoritarian imagery than comic books produced during times of low threat....In terms of authoritarian aggression, we argue that a villain symbolizes an out-group member whose criminal activity justifies retaliation on the part of the hero....Furthermore, compared with low-threat years, during high-threat years covers of comic books should depict aggressive actions by villains, which legitimizes the comeuppance of the villain in the interior pages of the comic (890).

Similarly to Sales and Doty et al, Peterson and Gerstein found significantly greater imagery associated with authoritarian aggression, conventionalism, and authoritarian submission during periods of high social threat relative to periods of low social threat. Empirical studies thus seem to have established a substantial link between periods of high social threat and a search for charismatic leaders, as well as a preference during these periods for the kind of heroic stories

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which developed a long-running World War II storyline in which Terry joined the US Air Force. "Terry and the Pirates" creator Milton Caniff drew an even tighter relationship between the strip and the military by writing a more sexually explicit version of the comic strip for military newspapers. Peterson and Gerstein (2005) point out that, in fact, most superhero characters joined the Allied forces during World War II. "Captain America" was another comic which became particularly popular as a result of the lead character's association with the "real" military.

<sup>7</sup> It is hard not to see the television action-drama "24", which began in November 2001, as an excellent example of this phenomenon.

which reflect authoritarian aggression. This suggests that during periods of threat, leaders are more likely to be seen as heroes by followers, and might attempt to enhance or prolong this effect through the use of heroic, inspiring imagery. Meanwhile, the heroic framing they do use will be satisfying for audience members who experience an increase in authoritarian tendencies during the period of increased threat.

## International Images, Social Identity and Threat

The literatures on charisma, authoritarianism and the effect of threat offer a basis for hypothesizing some domestic causes and effects related to the president's heroic framing. However, since I am looking particularly at the president's heroic framing of foreign policy issues, I also looked at aspects of the international relations literature which provide some insights for the study of presidential heroic framing. I found that certain strands of political psychology fit with my observation of the stark "good versus evil" dynamic present in the heroic narrative. Despite the complicated and multi-layered nature of international relations, speech which invokes the heroic narrative provides a particularly black and white, unequivocal judgment on the world. In the context of conflicts, this typically means a particularly heroic characterization of the home or allied state and a particularly villainous characterization of a designated enemy. Two international relations research programs examine the significance of leaders' use of negative imagery in connection with other states. The first, image theory, finds that leaders and populations within states develop a regular set of stereotyped images of foreign states which then guide their foreign policy preferences. The second, social identity theory, provides another logic for the demonization of foreign states and another pathway by which threat increases positivity towards the home state while increasing hostility towards foreign states.

Image theory emerged from Kenneth Boulding's (1959) attempt to quantify the degree of affection or animosity felt between states based on each state's total "internal view of itself and its universe" (120). Richard Herrmann and his colleagues (1997) argued that common beliefs held within one state about another state's 1) military capability, 2) cultural values, and 3) quality of offering a threat or a benefit summed into a type of *gestalt* image about the foreign state. This image encapsulated the essence of how that foreign state was perceived within the home state. The images Herrmann et al describe are familiar ideal-types from narrative contexts beyond international relations. The Enemy image is particularly linked, in that it jibes perfectly with its cognate within the heroic narrative, the villain. The Enemy state is judged to have "evil and unlimited" intentions, including "a variety of imperial interests in economic, ideological, and communal domination." However, the Enemy has a "domestic weakness [which] overrides the empirical evidence of substantial capability" (411). Herrmann et al go on to outline images of such types as the Ally (similar culture, similar capability, opportunity for mutual gain), the Barbarian (threatening, superior capability but inferior culturally), the Degenerate (similar culture, similar capability, but morally weak and therefore exploitable), and the Colony (inferior

culture and capability, exploitable.)<sup>8</sup> The cluster of beliefs collected together to create each image in turn represent a cognitive schema, in which the evocation of any one subset of the beliefs which make up the larger image evokes other traits which are also characteristic of the evoked image. These clustered traits then create the basis for judgments about foreign policy decisions, including support for more aggressive policy options. Herrmann et al found that when they held objective facts about a potential conflict constant, subjects were more likely to support military conflict when experimenters invoked aspects of the Enemy image. Mark Shafer (1997) found a similar effect in a related experiment on images and policy preferences.

Other scholars have observed a similar effect from denigrating images of foreign nations, such as is true in the literature on Orientalism (Said 1978) or other applications of the concept of “otherization” (e.g., Doty 1993). However, the approach taken by Herrmann and his colleagues has the advantage of positioning images of the Enemy (and the related negative images of the Degenerate, the Colony, and the Barbarian) alongside similarly flat, stereotypical images of the Ally. In other words, this perspective reduces all of the international system to a series of comic book images, quite similar to the heroic narrative’s simplification of complicated, multi-party historical scenarios into clear and easy moral binaries. It suggests that while presidents may make strategic use of heroic imagery, these images fit neatly into an existing set of simple cognitive schema which audiences routinely activate in the context of national foreign policy.

Image theory is related to another line of political psychology research which has bearings on heroic framing: the effects of social identity. In the initial work on image theory, Herrmann and his colleagues did not directly investigate the question of what motivates the images of foreign states. However, other scholars working in the image theory literature observed that international images function much like stereotypes, serving a similar function of reinforcing and protecting the social identities of those who hold them. Researchers found that subjects who experienced a threat before making a judgment about other countries were more likely to confirm negative stereotypes about potentially competing groups and endorse of the kind of images described in image theory (Alexander et al 1999; 2005). These phenomena reflect similar principles to behaviors predicted by social identity theory, which holds that individuals will strive to maintain a positive image of their in-group and will discriminate against members of relevant out-groups in order to maintain that image.

Social identity theory was originated by Henri Tajfel (1981), who developed the concept of social identity to describe that part of an individual’s self-concept which depends on his or her membership in social groups. Just as an individual will strive to maintain a positive self-image in order to maintain self-esteem, Tajfel posited, individuals will also strive to maintain positive images of their social identities in order to maintain self-esteem. Unlike one’s self-hood, however, people do often have a variety of social identities (religious group, clan or family identity, nationhood, club or school membership) so the process of maintaining positive group self-esteem is a more complex process. Individuals who have multiple social identities can shift their sense of which social identity is most important to them at any particular moment; these

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<sup>8</sup> Herrmann et al fail to outline an image for the Victim, but it is easy to imagine one which – possessing a similar or superior culture, an opportunity for mutual gain, but inferior capability – would essentially be represented as a less-capable Ally.



shifts depend on a number of contextual variables. Once an individual chooses a salient social identity for a particular context, they begin, according to self-categorization theory (Turner et al 1987) to self-stereotype and start seeing themselves as prototypical of the social group they have selected and, according to social identity theory, start demonstrating favoritism towards other group members.

This process is theorized to be a constant subconscious process for all individuals and generally something which occurs without causing serious conflict. It can be seen, in fact, as a way to often avoid conflict, as it permits individuals to avoid social esteem problems by changing their group allegiances when a social identity comes under threat. However, when group members feel that it is impossible to escape identification with a social group and that group comes under threat, group members will circle the wagons and raise their positive evaluations of the “in-group” while increasing negative evaluations of the relevant “out-group.” Social identity theorists see this as the basis of all ethnocentrism and negative stereotyping of other groups – the creation of evil “Others” (Horowitz 1985, Staub 1992). The desire to best the out-group becomes so acute because of the deep need to satisfy wounded self-esteem, a goal which is achievable only through succeeding in competition against the demonized out-group. The question of material gains that might be achievable through cooperation between the groups thus falls by the wayside. Because social identity theorists see the “us-versus-them” aspect of intergroup conflict as being based in essentially non-materialist, emotional logic, they disagree with rationalist accounts of war. Instead, war is viewed as an opportunity to recapture a sense of positive self-esteem and the chief heroic boon is victory over an internalized fear of one’s own inadequacy.

The enemy image, rooted in a desire to cast out negative feelings about the self, thus constitutes a powerful political resource both through its invocation and through the emotional satisfaction provided by its demonization and conquest. In this sense, the heroic frame provides an important psychological release. In addition to providing a theoretical basis for the origins of international images, meanwhile, social identity theory serves as a useful conceptual grounding for thinking about the kind of otherizing, dehumanizing, and scapegoating behavior in international interaction which might be suggested by certain uses of the heroic frame.

Given the potential for violence inherent in social-identity motivated scapegoating, the subject of how leaders dehumanize their opponents has received significant scholarly attention. Many scholars have described how presidents frequently deploy strongly negative images of other states in order to promote their foreign policies (Finlay et al 1967, Ivie 1980, 2007; Cherwitz and Zagacki 1986, Bostdorff 1994, Kuypers 2006, Liberman 2006); the practice of “fearmongering,” or the disingenuous and deliberate effort to elevate national concern about a particular foreign policy target, is a frequent subject of in both popular and academic political discussions (Brzezinski 2007, New School for Social Research 2004). While a few scholars have also explored the president's use of positive rhetorical imagery about himself or the home state in the context of foreign policy crisis (Bostdorff 1994) and image theorists note the state’s positive imagery about Allies in addition to the negative images associated with other states, negative images of other states have, on the whole, received far more scholarly attention than either positive images of other states or even positive images of the home state. This greater focus on the negative qualities of the other, rather than the threatened, problematically vulnerable qualities of the self, fits with the predictions of outgroup derogation under social identity theory. This

tendency, predicted by social identity theory, also fits with the descriptions of political speech as “victimage”, or scapegoating (Burke 1989, Bostdorff 1994), a subject often examined in the context of political rhetorical analysis. Political “victimage” stems from the problem of what to do with an inadmissible sense of personal guilt, according to theorist Kenneth Burke. While one solution, “mortification,” involves blaming the self, this is often less politically advantageous than scapegoating an external party, which has the advantage of both creating an external locus for the source of the problem and also creating an “antithetical identificational appeal” (Bostdorff 1994), or encouraging the national group to unite against the identified enemy.<sup>9</sup> Images of the enemy described as a form of victimage often include images of the enemy as savage (Ivie 1980, Klope 1986, Scott 2000) which further simplifies the conflict by dichotomizing the world between human and sub-human.

However, while social identity is an attractive paradigm for international relations, it requires more steps in its application than has typically been the case to date. As Henri Tajfel (1984) pointed out, in order to understand intergroup relations:

Social identity is not enough. The subtle and complex interactions between group strategies striving to achieve positive group distinctiveness...[cannot] be properly understood without considering another set of complex interactions: the interplay between the creation or diffusion of social myths and the processes of social influence as they operate in the setting of intergroup relations and group affiliations (713; cited in Brown 2000).

An overly-simplified application of social identity theory does not permit for the critical stage of identity activation and selection (or self-categorization.) Citizens do not have chronically activated national identities. The question, then, becomes: *who's* national social identity are we talking about, and *under what circumstances* will it be activated, and *why*. Once again, the role of threat may be an important mediator in the activation of strong social identities and the desire to discriminate against outgroup members (Branscombe et al 1999). By using heroic framing to increase the salience of the threat from out-group members, it may be possible to activate social identity functions and thereby increase support for hostile policies.

In fact, thinking about it in this way, social identity can be understood as being at least partially a product of the persuasive or rhetorical field. The activation of national social identities in a way that makes people accept the “reality” of the in-group’s heroism and the out-group’s villainy may be particularly enabled through the “creation or diffusion of social myths” supported by heroic imagery. If presidents seek to use the power of group-based fear to increase support for

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<sup>9</sup> This process is also known as the cultivation of a sense of “common fate” (Campbell 1958) which is perceived to be one of the main ways of creating a sense of entitativity, or the “groupness” of a group. Increasing entitativity – the perception that one own’s group constitutes a defined group, or the perception that one’s antagonist constitutes a defined group – increases stereotyping (Spencer-Rogers et al 2007), creates more definite political attitudes (McGraw and Dolan 2007) and increases perceptions of intergroup hostility and aggression (Castano et al 2003).

a policy, heroic framing offers just the kind of myth which might help to activate conflict-relevant identities.

## The Significance of Presidential Speech

In addition to the heroic frame, this project focuses particularly on the US president as rhetorician. As a powerful official who paradoxically draws a substantial portion of his power from the perception of his power, the modern-day presidency enjoys a strong association with the power of public speech. To understand what particular benefits the president might reap from his use of heroic framing, I reviewed the US presidency literature with a particular focus on presidential rhetoric.

Scholars have long identified the power of the US presidency as emanating from a combination of institutional and symbolic power (Neustadt 1991). The president plays an important role as an authoritative decision-maker, but this role is enhanced by his symbolic status as a personification of the state. Due to fears about the untrammelled power such a person could wield if this symbolic source of power was not adequately restrained, the framers of the American Constitution worked to limit the president's control through the separation of powers and limitations on the role of the executive. However, Jeffery Tulis (1987) described how they specifically feared the potential role presidential speech could play in invoking spirits of demagoguery, in which the president could use his symbolic, nation-embodying power to win public support for his policies and in so doing override policy carefully developed in Congress. To limit the potential for this kind of event, Tulis notes that the "nineteenth-century" rhetorical tradition for presidents held that presidents should not discuss policy in public, but only with Congress, and that presidents should speak only about inspiring, Constitution-faithful principles when addressing the public. Through a close examination of historical speech patterns, Tulis demonstrates that the 18th and 19th centuries were characterized by presidential rhetorical restraint, as presidents spoke infrequently and plainly. Tulis describes this tendency shifting dramatically under Woodrow Wilson. Wilson departed strongly from this model by determining that part of the role of the president was to "interpret" the nation's will through his own speech. Clearly, the notion of the president as the sole legitimate national "interpreter" offers some problems for a multi-branched democratic system.

To some extent, the notion of the president as interpreter of the national will harkens back to ancient expectations of rhetorical leadership. While presidents do perform the political task of persuasion through their speech, we now see them as holding certain national rhetorical duties as the sole truly nationally elected representative: when a major world event occurs, we expect the president to remark on it. In this role, the president – in addition to his political role – is charged with the duty to provide apolitical interpretations of important events.

The difference between his political and apolitical role is best explored through classical distinctions in rhetoric. Beginning with Aristotle, scholars categorized rhetorical discourse into several varieties; two major ones were the *symbouleutic* and *epideictic* genres. *Symbouleutic* or "deliberative" speech is rhetoric which is used to persuade the public of the merits of a particular course of political action (Too 2001). Ordinarily, we would expect that most speech by

politicians would fall into this category. Epideictic speech, meanwhile, is ceremonial speech which expresses praise or blame, uses a poetic style, and rhapsodizes on the virtues of a particular object in order to illustrate the ethical nature of the community (Stuckey 2006, Too 2001). The ostensible purpose of epideictic speech is to please the audience by eloquently praising a subject while simultaneously providing an example in civic virtue. The classic illustration of the epideictic speech is a funeral eulogy. Meanwhile, epideictic speech can also be subtly political. For instance, while Mary Stuckey (2006) describes a principle function of Reagan's epideictic address on the 1986 Challenger explosion as providing solace, she also identifies quietly persuasive political elements in the ceremonial speech, finding them likely to have particular political impact because audiences are not prepared to find – and are thus unresistant to – political persuasion in the context of ceremonial speech. Yun Lee Too (2001), similarly, argues that while the ceremonial epideictic address is particularly exemplified by the commemoration of war dead, the epideictic mode can also be observed in modern day political propaganda and product advertising.

Therefore, whether his message is overt or hidden within an epideictic address, scholars often believe when the president assumes his role as neutral celebrant, or as the nation's "interpreter-in-chief" (Stuckey 1991), he may actually increase the likelihood of presidential demagoguery and reduce the possibility of legislative deliberation. By strengthening the notion that the president is uniquely positioned to somehow distill the essence of mass beliefs into policy, the Wilsonian presidential "interpreter" model provides a justification for greatly concentrated presidential power. Moreover, it is an extremely hard kind of power to deny or delegitimize as it has an essentially immaterial, metaphysical basis. The theory advanced by Samuel Kernell (1986) that presidents now frequently "go public" provides further evidence for the possibility that increased power through the use of public rhetoric may lead to demagoguery. "Going public," according to Kernell, is the presidential decision to make a public address to seek support from the public when he faces legislative opposition. Kernell sees this choice as functioning as an alternative to bargaining with Congress, since the president who "goes public" effectively threatens Congressional representatives into agreeing to follow the president's policy preferences by trying to set their own constituents against them.

This revised understanding of the president's role as that of 'national rhetorician' reached a kind of apogee under the presidency of Ronald Reagan, an individual so associated with rhetoric that he earned the sobriquet "The Great Communicator." Scholars examined this shift with a new focus on presidential rhetoric. The two most influential pieces of scholarship on the institutional shift in presidential public speaking, Kernell's *Going Public* and Tulis' *The Rhetorical Presidency*, were both produced in the last years of the Reagan administration. A number of other thorough explorations of the expanded role of presidential speaking appeared in the first few years following the Reagan presidency.<sup>10</sup> The very fact that the person chosen to be president in 1980 was nationally known primarily for his rhetorical skills, for his effectiveness as an actor, seems to have truly demonstrated that the rhetorical presidency – and the creation of a substantial presidential power base out of public speaking – to be a fait accompli. The fact that

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<sup>10</sup> For a long list of titles, see George C. Edwards (1996).

Reagan was also known for his prominent use of heroic imagery suggests the close relationship that presidential reliance on persuasive, symbolic power and the use of heroic framing may enjoy.

### Presidential rhetoric in the context of foreign policy

The US president has generally enhanced his power through maximizing his public role. However, the president's expanded powers are likely to have an especially substantial effect in the realm of foreign policy, where he already exercises disproportionate influence. This suggests that particularly for the president and particularly within the realm of foreign policy, the use of strong rhetorical strategies like heroic framing may enjoy special effectiveness.

The president's greater influence in the realm of foreign policy, relative to his power over domestic policy, is not fully self-evident from the Constitutional designation of governmental powers. After all, Congress is both officially enjoined with the power to declare war and to appropriate funds for war. However, Aaron Wildavsky, in his study of the "two presidencies" (1966), noted that unlike the mixed record of congressional support for presidents' domestic policies, presidents almost always enjoy congressional support for foreign policies when they argue that those policies will help protect the nation. Rather than stemming purely from legal sources, the source of this power appears to lie in a combination of the prestige of the presidency as well as the president's Constitutionally-designated formal powers. These powers have also expanded as successive presidents have continually worked to develop them.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, despite the greater degree of power they enjoy in the sphere of foreign policy, presidents must still involve the public in creating support for those policies. Presidential speech on foreign policy subjects is clearly influential in the realm of public opinion. James Meernik and Michael Ault (2001) demonstrate that the president's mention of a foreign policy during his State of the Union address increases public support for those policies by six percentage points. Jeffery Cohen (1997) similarly found that increased attention to foreign policy in State of the Union addresses led to substantial and significant increases in the degree to which public poll respondents identified foreign policy issues as personally salient. The reasons for why presidential foreign policy speech is likely to be especially successful in affecting public opinion on foreign policy stem both from the aforementioned symbolic significance of the president's position as well as a lower degree of personal knowledge about foreign policy subjects and thus a greater susceptibility to influence from credible sources (Canes-Wrone 2006). However, where foreign policy speech is infused with the immediacy of crisis, presidential speech gains a new dimension of effectiveness. The literature on presidential crisis rhetoric supports this notion, identifying presidential crisis rhetoric as departing from normal policy rhetoric by asserting the urgent nature of the event and the critical need for response and thereby heightening expectations that the president can be relied upon to respond decisively and competently (Kiewe 1994,

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<sup>11</sup>Meanwhile, scholars working since the end of the Cold War have cast some doubt on the viability of the two-presidencies hypothesis (Canes-Wrone et al. 2008), suggesting that the advantage that presidents enjoyed may have largely been due to the heightened and specific threat of the Soviet Union.



Kuypers 1997). Martin Medhurst and his colleagues (1997) described the role of rhetoric over the course of the Cold War, pointing out that engaged public and political response to foreign policy rhetoric was, in fact, “*the issue*; it constituted the central substance that required serious attention if the Cold War was to remain cold and rhetoric was to continue being used in place of instruments of death” (xiv).

The way that the president then chooses to speak about threat may not simply help him develop support for his policies, but may also help him achieve more general approval. Studies on the psychology of terror management suggest that by manipulating mortality salience – that is, by reminding individuals of death – worldviews that evoke “a heroic fight against evil” become more attractive and leaders who speak about the followers’ group as “undertaking a righteous mission to obliterate evil” might be particularly appealing (Pyszczynski et al 2006, 527). Similarly, subliminal mentions of the September 11th attacks were found both to enhance mortality salience and increase approval for George W. Bush (Landau et al 2004). These points suggest that not only describing threat, but describing it in morally extreme, heroic terms earns the president a special degree of favor.

The use of extreme, heroic imagery and the evocation of threats is thus potentially advantageous to the president. However, eventually, one imagines that repeated announcements of threat would reveal the insincerity of the president’s claims.<sup>12</sup> Presidents could easily find themselves in a bind by accusing other states of posing a danger but then find themselves unwilling to militarily pursue all of these “threats.” Matthew Baum (2004) describes this problem as the downside of “going public” with arguments about the threat posed by another state, and the primary reason why presidents might often wish instead to “go private” and seek quiet diplomacy with adversaries. However, it is unclear whether presidents would be punished for frequently mentioning non-specific, non-state, or otherwise-qualified foreign threats, all of which would fail to generate the same immediate expectation of military action. To the extent that the extended Homeland Security Advisory System (the US color-coded terrorism alert) represents an expression of this frequent, non-state-specific source of threat, we see that at least in this case the frequent alert without any observable military response has degraded the efficacy of these threat warnings and led to a public belief that the system represents an effort to manipulate them (Shapiro and Cohen 2007).

## Media Effects

While the literatures I have reviewed above help suggest why the president might be in a particularly good position to benefit from the use of heroic framing, I will now explore the pathways by which the president’s heroic framing might come to affect the domestic audience. The president does speak to small audiences directly. However, his speech is carried to an exponentially larger audience through the news media. It is sometimes transmitted directly, in the form of a broadcast or transcript, but more often the media will convey an aspect of the

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<sup>12</sup> The audience cost for not engaging has also been entertainingly described in a separate literature as the “Chicken Little effect” (Blinken 2003).

president's speech through a quotation, through adopting the president's perspective on a subject, or perhaps just through enhanced journalistic attention to the topics the president covers. I theorize that the president's use of heroic framing will produce media affects, which is to say that the president's use of heroic framing in connection with a particular foreign policy subject will change the way that the media cover that subject. I will now review the different ways that the president's use of heroic framing might affect media coverage.

### *Framing*

The most direct way that the president's use of heroic framing could affect media coverage would be if the media typically adopted the president's heroic frame in response to his use of it. This would mean that if the president used substantial heroic language in connection with a foreign policy subject, the media would too when covering that subject. This sort of effect would be the very strongest effect to find, since it would essentially represent a wholesale, uncritical adoption of the president's perspective on subjects which are normally viewed as complex and politically contentious.

The concept of "framing" encompasses a large category of rhetorical tactics which function by persuading audience members to adopt a particular "problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (Entman 1993). In the modern political communications context, Goffman (1974) was the first to use the term "framing" to describe the process of creating individual "definitions of a situation" (10) that allow people to make sense of objects and events. While Goffman developed this perspective in order to perform "frame analysis" as a mode of ethnographic research, the use of the term "framing" to describe an indirect method of rhetorical persuasion quickly spread to scholars interested in political communication.<sup>13</sup> Gitlin (1980), in his analysis of the use of media framing to delegitimize leftist protest, provided one of the first popular applications of the framing concept in the context of political communication.<sup>14</sup> Gitlin defined frames as "principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters" (6). Gamson and Modigliani (1989) then reconstituted frames as "interpretive packages" which are attractive to journalists and news consumers because they help them make sense of events in the world. While news consumers are not merely passive and their opinions are not shaped solely by news frames, "making sense of the world requires an effort" (10) and frames provide a useful, low-effort shortcut for news consumers. Gamson and Modigliani believed frames were most likely to be adopted by news producers when they contained cultural resonance (thematic elements tying the frame to familiar social ideas),

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<sup>13</sup>A field related to framing developed in the academic analysis of rhetoric, where scholars do not look at "framing" but instead use Kenneth Burke's method of pentadic analysis. Pentadic analysis was also derived from Goffmann's conception of framing and represents a parallel analytic mode to political communication's frame analysis (Burke et al 1989).

<sup>14</sup>Tuchman's *Making News* (1978) was another major contemporary treatment of media framing.

sponsorship (the support of powerful people or organizations), and alignment with existing journalistic norms.

Gamson and Modigliani's perspective that frames serve an advantageous purpose both for the framers and for the frame consumers remains a key underlying assumption in most current research on the process of framing. Most current work rests on a foundation of beliefs about the "advantageous" cognitive role framing plays for the news consumer: the way in which it reduces the effort required to understand external events. Nelson, Oxley and Clawson (1997) emphasize that the way that frames achieve their effect of belief change is not by providing new information to audience members, but rather by helping them choose which already-held information to bring to bear in making a judgement about an issue.<sup>15</sup> They identify the psychological utility of framing as follows:

In the turbulent world of politics, one's determination of the relevance or importance of a particular consideration can produce great uncertainty and ambivalence...Much like a consumer trying to strike a balance between price and quality or between reliability and convenience, the ordinary citizen must deliberate competing values, beliefs, and emotional attachments to make the "right choice" on divisive political issues...Such judgements as these can be difficult, yet the public is regularly called upon to make them...This is the setting in which frames operate. Frames tell people how to weight the often conflicting considerations that enter into everyday political deliberations (226).

Scholars of media effects have also noted that where people do not have existing opinions on an issue, they are willing to accept journalists' framings or interpretations of those issues (Graber 2004). While this is not necessarily the case where individuals already have a strong opinion, there are a variety of political issues that do not affect people strongly on a day-to-day basis and thus are good candidates for greater audience acceptance of news frames.

Much of the literature on framing takes framing very seriously as a political activity, suggesting that framing is not merely something that political actors sometimes do, but that it is one of the primary activities of political life. Presidents and their communications staff must not just seek to do it, but continually consider how to use their ability to frame foreign policy issues to their best benefit. In this light, heroic framing may be useful as a type of frame that presidents use on certain foreign policy issues in order to guide audiences to use the heroic narrative as a way of judging the issue. This framing would play the secondary function of leading most in the audience to think of their country as heroic in the context of the foreign policy issue. Of course, framing is not brainwashing, and it is possible to be successful at framing an issue and yet not win public support. A danger of the heroic frame, for example, may be that by making moral judgment salient, it could lead audiences to have other kinds of heightened moral responses to

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<sup>15</sup> Nelson, Oxley and Clawson's work is based on yet another framing research program: Kahneman and Tversky's work on framing in the context of the psychology of economics. Tversky and Kahneman (1974, 1979) explore a version of framing which they label "prospect theory" -- the fact that people will change their judgements about the riskiness of a choice based on whether the choice is presented with a "losses frame" or a "gains frame".



the issue. If an audience is primed to consider the positive moral dimension of US military engagement, for example, they may become especially sensitive to civilian deaths occurring as a result of that engagement.

Heroic framing is, in essence, a variety of frame which promotes a particularly unambiguous, categorical moral evaluation of its subject. Moral frames can have effective results for their originators, particularly when combined with particularly susceptible audiences. For example, moral framing, with use of terms like “evil”, increases support for “punitive” policies by some segments of the population (i.e., those inclined to moral punitiveness in other policy dimensions, like the death penalty (Lieberman 2006). Further, Colleen Shogan (2006) investigated the presidential use of moral language in State of the Union and Inaugural Addresses and found that presidents gained particular political advantage when they used moral and religious references to rally a marginally unified political base, justify complicated legislative initiatives, and to steal political momentum away when Congress threatens to oppose their initiatives.

### *Media Agenda-Setting*

Media agenda-setting (henceforth, just “agenda-setting) is another potential pathway by which presidential heroic framing might affect domestic audiences. Less concerned with the direct transmission of messages to audiences, agenda-setting is the hypothesis that while the media “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think...it is stunningly successful in telling its [audience] what to think *about*” (Cohen 1963, 13). In other words, news stories which relay the president’s speeches may not directly persuade people to hold specific opinions, but they are likely to convince people that his subject constitutes an important, or “salient,” issue.

One of the best-documented media effects, agenda-setting has been studied through field-based survey experiments, time-series analyses of opinion polls, and lab experiments. While other scholars had theorized an agenda-setting effect, active empirical research on the subject began with McCombs and Shaw's (1972) study of the effects of newspaper coverage on prospective voters' list of priority national issues. McCombs and Shaw demonstrated that the degree to which particular issues were covered in relevant media outlets reliably corresponded to the degree of importance that respondents assigned each issue. This seminal work was followed by research that more effectively proved that respondents were not basing their answers on more objective measures of real-world events, but that respondent perception of what constituted a salient issue changed reliably based on changes in media coverage of particular issues (e.g., Funkhauser 1973, Iyengar and Kinder 1989). While individuals may gather a lifetime's-worth of information about political issues, they are most likely to pay attention to issues which are raised most and thus made most psychologically “available” (Kinder 1998) . Mass media is by far the most frequent provider of information on national and international political issues, and when an individual has no personal experience with an issue, the media is the most natural resource for issue learning (Weaver et al. 1981).

While news producers in a democratic society typically have control over their own agendas, there are at minimum two ways that agenda-setting – while not being directly determined by political leaders – could nonetheless be strongly affected by leaders' agenda preferences. The first method is illustrated by a theory of media coverage known as the indexing

theory. Indexing theory states that journalists feel a need to tie their stories to perspectives existing within the established official political elite (Bennett 1990, Mermin 1999). If there is substantial dissension within the elite on a subject, the media coverage of that subject may become more wide-ranging; if there is little dissension in the political elite, journalists are unlikely to present alternate viewpoints. To the extent that the president would like to drive the media agenda, he would either need to have already achieved the support of the majority of members of the political elite, or he would need to capitalize on dissension, by actively pointing out the way his policy is being opposed.

A second way would be to create a news “event” by making a memorable speech. The State of the Union address, for instance, is treated as an event in itself, broadcast directly to the public as well as being dissected and analyzed by journalists in the days after the speech. While every day can't bring its own State of the Union address, I view it as possible that the president may attempt to create “news” by speaking in a particularly remarkable way about the issues he seeks to highlight. Presidential speeches in general are covered as news, at least perfunctorily; the rhetorical bar that the president must surpass in order to generate several articles, instead of one, may not ultimately be that high. Now, as agenda-setting scholars would likely assert (Graber 2003), the agenda-setting effect may occur independently of presidential influence. However, given the media's reliance on governmental sources – and the degree to which they particularly depend on governmental sources for guidance on covering foreign news (Livingston and Bennett 1993, Bartels 1996) – presidential attempts to influence media coverage of issues which the president would like to see covered will get more traction. This is particularly likely when a foreign policy issue is not already the subject of regular media attention and when the president signals that he sees the issue as a policy priority (Peake 2001). It is possible that heroic framing is one method by which the president signals to the media that he would like something covered more closely.

### *Journalistic Narrative*

A final area of media effects to consider concerns the way that political speech interacts with the ways that journalists present news stories. Norms of practice drive journalists' preferences for clear narratives; meanwhile, modern modes of media presentation create incentives to reduce complex world events to clear, simplified storylines. Because of the way that it conforms to preferred modes of storywriting, heroic imagery which evokes the heroic narrative is likely to increase the chances that the president's speech will receive coverage. If the president views something as a particular priority, therefore, he has an incentive to make its packaging simple and heroic.

Media norms and publication restraints seem to limit the complexity of the political messages available to the general public. This criticism has particularly been leveled at media outlets with regard to coverage and the expense of advertising during political campaigns (Graber 2003) but it is also certainly true of the coverage of policymaking. Covering the complexity of actual policymaking runs up against the problem that media outlets need to attract a broad array of audiences in order to continue to turn a profit. Political concepts that are difficult and time-consuming to comprehend are typically viewed as uninteresting, or at least not entertaining,

and thus an obstacle to maintaining a consumer base of an acceptable size.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, media actors tend to write stories based on information provided by government officials, as relying on government sources as an authoritative source for a story provides an easy, legitimate way to frame reality (Schudson 2002, Bennett 1996). Thus, while the policy that those government actors create may in fact be quite complex, they must either present it in a simple form or accept that journalists will simplify it for them. This tendency has been accelerated by the even greater demands for cognitive simplicity demanded by television. Television changed the nature of speechwriting, particularly with regard to the complexity of presidential speeches. Jeffery Tulis (1987) interviewed presidential speechwriters who acknowledged that the “one-sentence paragraphs so common to presidential messages are consciously designed to accommodate television news” (187).

In order to resolve the problem of making government-based news entertaining, the creation and elaboration of narratives become an important solution. As W. Lance Bennett (1996) describes,

the lines between news and entertainment, and between citizens and consumers [blurred],...the news maintains a semblance of coherence under these conditions of political management and commercial merchandising largely through the journalistic crafting of narratives. Perhaps not surprisingly, the narrative forms that dominated mainstream news generally contain lowest-common-denominator information that secures the daily news supply, often at the expense of topical continuity and citizen enlightenment” (382).

By using heroic framing, presidents offer a compelling package to media producers. Containing a clear designation of good characters and bad characters, presidential heroic framing assists in the production of news narratives.

Further, this depiction of a clear hero and a clear villain should be especially appealing to media outlets because it presents the opportunity to use a frequent news narrative: the conflict between two perspectives. Scholars who analyze news framing have identified the “conflict frame” to be one of the most common ways for journalists to organize a story (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000). The conflict frame is a product of journalistic norms, since journalists are taught that good practice “emphasizes reporting stories in terms of experts who offer clashing interpretations” (Neuman et al 1992). The heroic narrative thus provides either an easy and familiar frame that can simply be adopted unaltered as the basis for a news story or, alternately, a strong, simple perspective against which a news reporter could match a second perspective. Since the heroic frame can always be critiqued for its over-simplification of reality, journalists can always find someone to identify the stark morality of the president's heroic framing as problematic and insufficiently realistic. Either way, however, the president’s message is reported.

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<sup>16</sup> According to Samuel Kernell and Matthew Baum’s (1999) analysis of the role played by media fragmentation in the wake of cable television, the new realities of consumer choice make it ever more imperative that the president’s message be delivered concisely and entertainingly.

## The Signaling Function of Heroic Framing

The president's use of heroic framing could have a substantial effect on domestic discourse through the way that it changes media reporting on a subject. However, the US president has foreign as well as domestic audiences. The president's use of heroic framing may have implications for international relations if he uses it to "send a message" to potential adversaries. This use of public speech to communicate hostility is known as "signaling." Signaling is described in the study of rationalist explanations for war as the way that states let other states know that they are aggrieved enough to go to war (Fearon 1995). According to this perspective, since all states should rationally prefer to achieve their policy ends without actually engaging in war, which is a damaging enterprise for all sides, they would like to know their potential opponents' military capabilities and relative degree of commitment to their preferred outcome. Once these things are known, states can negotiate to achieve what they perceive to be a fair bargain given the parties' relative power and degree of commitment. A major problem in achieving these negotiations is that states have a large incentive to engage in bluffing about their capabilities and commitment. Bluffing is tempting because if states aren't actually going to have their capabilities and commitment tested on the battlefield, why wouldn't they inflate their self-assessments in these dimensions in order to get a better bargain?

Fear of bluffing creates the need for "costly signals" which will harm the signaler if the information they relay by way of those signals turn out to be false. James Fearon (1994, 1997) explicated the notion of "domestic audience costs" as one way for states to provide a "costly signal" and thereby signal credibly to opponents that they are not bluffing. Domestic audience costs are generated when a political leader stands in front of his constituents and threatens another state. If the leader backs down after issuing a threat, his constituents will punish him – or, in modern democratic terms, throw him out of office – for "engag[ing] the national honor" (Fearon 1994, 581) without following through and thereby harming the state's reputation.<sup>17</sup> Thus, whenever the president creates a heroic frame and casts another country in the role of villain, the president also runs the risk of appearing insufficiently resolute<sup>18</sup> if he doesn't follow through and initiate a military conflict. Now, it is entirely possible that merely casting another country as a villain does not constitute a threat to the targeted state in the sense that the signaling literature intends. However, it seems reasonable to expect that repeated demonizations of a foreign policy target will raise similar domestic concerns about the state's reputation and the leader's capacity for follow-through if the leader does not eventually address the problem he has defined through heroic framing.

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<sup>17</sup> That domestic audiences are empirically likely to act this way was demonstrated through a set of survey experiments run by Michael Tomz (2007).

<sup>18</sup> Or perhaps will appear incompetent, according to Alistair Smith (1998), who argues that populations want to see their leaders engage in conflicts to demonstrate proof of their competence. This argument is somewhat related to my argument that citizens feel more positively about their leader under conditions of threat, although it is kind of its inverse: here, citizens seek threat in order to test the quality of their leader.

This function means that while US presidents may be tempted to rely heavily on heroic framing for domestic reasons, this framing may be perceived by foreign audiences as a statement about US willingness to fight. Fearon (1994) notes that international audiences do matter in the sense that if a state gains a reputation for not following through on threats, international audiences will think less of that state. Of course, international audiences may simply be angry or threatened by foreign leaders directing strong rhetoric against them in the first place. For example, the 1979 statement by the Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini that the United States was the “Great Satan” represents an example of political rhetoric which has embedded itself deeply into American public knowledge of Iran and which has most likely produced a certain degree of public enthusiasm for conflict with Iran. This effect suggests itself as another potential consequence of threatening speech by a political leader. Rather than the domestic audience cost, in which leaders are punished for backing down after issuing a threat, foreign domestic audiences may seek to punish the foreign threatening leader for the threat itself. Their anger or fear may have the effect of compelling their leader to escalate with the threatening state, whether or not their leader perceives this to be militarily wise.

While the foreign policy target’s domestic audience has generally been ignored in the signaling literature, this dynamic has been preliminarily explored in model form by Shuhei Kurizaki (2007), who considers the relevant effect of foreign-domestic audience costs on political leaders’ decisions to engage in private diplomacy rather than public threats when the parties are interested in avoiding war if possible. Kurizaki notes that secret diplomacy can engage the logic of audience costs by both parties’ awareness of the possibility of “going public” with the conflict, while allowing them to maintain more control of the interaction without having to worry about appearing sufficiently martial in front of a domestic audience affronted by the other side’s threats.

A critical factor in the creation of both domestic audience costs and foreign-domestic audience costs is an enabling media, which carries threats made both by domestic political leaders against other states and foreign political leaders against the home state. Branislav Slantchev (2006), for example, has pointed out that the effectiveness of audience costs is likely to be limited by institutional political structure and by the degree of media freedom. However, it may be that these requirements can be relaxed with regard to the generation of foreign domestic audience costs. Since external threats are likely – at least in the short term – to lead citizens to support their own leaders, external threats may be relatively freely reported even where media exists under repression. At any rate, it seems reasonable to investigate reflections of US presidential heroic framing in the media of targeted foreign countries in order to understand not only how US presidential heroic framing may affect domestic foreign policymaking but also what kind of pressure it might indirectly create for foreign leaders.

A final consideration results from combining the possibility that US presidents use heroic framing as a method of signaling intention to foreign leaders with the possibility that they use it to increase public support for their policies. Presidents may intentionally try to do both of these things simultaneously – both create public support while also expressing belligerent intent to a foreign leader. In that case, the president’s foreign policy speech becomes a multivocal tool. John Padgett and Chris Ansell (1993) describe multivocality as “the fact that single actions can be interpreted coherently from multiple perspectives simultaneously [and can be] moves in many



games at once” (1263). These seems like a logical thing for a strategic president to attempt. However, it is also possible that heroic framing may serve as a multivocal tool even when the president does not intend for this to be the case. When the president speaks in heroic terms about other countries one might think that he is always conscious of the way that this speech is interpreted by other states, but it is possible that he would fail to consider the international implications of his speech. Alternately, it’s possible that he feels obliged to use the heroic frame for ceremonial purposes even though this frame will, unavoidably, have unintended signaling effects to foreign audiences.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I have looked at the range of potential mechanisms which may cause the president to use heroic framing or which may allow the president’s heroic framing to have meaningful effects. The scholarship on organizational charisma suggests that presidents may be more likely to make references to heroic imagery as a way of being perceived as charismatic, or to increase their popularity. The literature on authoritarianisms suggests that if certain citizens have a psychological need for certainty, scapegoating, and a preference for aggressive solutions to problems, then these people may very well demand a heroic narrative from their leader to describe the universe they inhabit. Both of these causes for heroic framing may be intensified by crisis or threat. During periods of threat, leaders are more likely to be seen as heroes by followers, and might attempt to enhance or prolong this effect through the use of heroic framing. Meanwhile, any heroic framing they do use will be satisfying for audience members who experience an increase in authoritarian tendencies as a result of the threat. Two psychological theories which have been applied to international relations, image theory and social identity theory, jointly suggest that leaders may use simplified stereotypes to help guide citizens to support particular foreign policies. These stereotypes, particularly mediated by threat, may increase citizens’ protectiveness towards their home state and their willingness to go to war.

I reviewed studies of presidential rhetoric which argued that the nature of the president’s power led him to accrue particular political benefits from dramatic public speaking. Part of these benefits arise from the somewhat hidden way that presidents can use ceremonial speech to perform the task of public persuasion. Since the president already enjoys special influence in the area of foreign policy, the effect of powerful speech is likely to be particularly evident in this domain. Presidents do face the danger, however, of overplaying this hand. If presidents “go public” too often with their strong rhetoric, they may reduce the effectiveness of this technique.

I expect that presidents can use heroic framing to cause domestic effects mainly by dint of media effects. Particular media effects that the president may be able to achieve include framing and agenda-setting, both of which might be facilitated by norms and practices common to news journalism. However, I also observed that the president’s use of heroic framing had international implications. To the extent that foreign effects were intentional, the president might choose to use heroic framing as a form of signaling an intention to escalate hostilities with a potential adversary. To the extent that the foreign effects were accidental, however, the president may find



that he creates unintentional foreign hostility through rhetorical practices intended for a domestic audience.

## Chapter 3: Observing Heroic Rhetoric

Now appropriately situated, my construct of the heroic frame requires an operational definition which will guide my evaluation of its use and effects. Generally speaking, heroic framing is a rhetorical frame on speech which I assume will have both direct and mediated effects. I see heroic framing having direct effects when the president is successful in convincing his audience that the issue he frames is indeed properly understood in heroic terms: it is a situation that the president argues has real heroes, real villains and a real community-saving, life-giving goal at the end. I also assume that heroic framing will have indirect effects, in that it should encourage media outlets to increase their coverage of the president's preferred issue agenda, which in turn increases the salience – and public cognitive availability – of subjects the president would like to see in the public eye. This in turn may lead to actual or tacit support for the president to achieve his preferred policy with reference to the newly-salient subject.

### Development of a Keyword Dictionary

In order to test hypotheses about the president's use of heroic framing, I developed a "heroic rhetoric" variable for this project. There are several possible ways that I could have done this, ranging from a more qualitative and more context-sensitive to a more quantitative and less-context sensitive approach. In my development of a keyword dictionary to create a content analysis-friendly operational definition of heroic framing I tended more towards the quantitative, but I tried to incorporate considerations of context to a substantial extent. I then collected a "corpus" – the body of texts I used to create a daily heroic rhetoric independent variable for the entire period under examination. After describing these processes in greater detail, I will present some of my general observations about the president's use of heroic rhetoric.

The present moment is an excellent one for the computer-assisted study of presidential rhetoric. In some ways, without the assistance of computerized search engines, it is implausible to do a comprehensive over-time study on rhetorical patterns because the practical hurdles are simply too high. However, due to the present state of software sophistication and data accessibility, where it would formerly have been necessary for a scholar to read many volumes of the Collected Papers of the Presidents merely to locate the speeches she needed for testing her hypothesis, it is now possible to "read" all of those speeches at once, electronically, and perform a search for particular keywords or phrases.

My analysis depended on my developing a regular approach to the identification of heroic framing in presidential speech over the entire period of 1981 to 2005. With such a large number of texts to review I could not personally read and rank the degree of heroic rhetoric appearing in every single text I include. Instead, I defined heroic framing in terms of a series of keywords which evoke the heroic narrative and which I imagine are likely to appear in texts which employ heroic imagery. I call my particular operational definition of heroic framing "heroic rhetoric" in order to differentiate it from the larger, more holistic construct; henceforth, when I speak about "heroic rhetoric" that signifies the amount of heroic framing in a text as signified by the presence of a set of selected keywords.

Now, admittedly, this method lacks some subtlety. The fact that not all of the texts that I select through this method will in fact demonstrate heroic imagery – and the fact that some texts which are not identified through this method will use heroic imagery – is a validity problem I face as a result of this method. My hope is that it is a minor enough problem that it won't prevent me from finding effects, if they exist. Since it seems reasonable to assume that these false positives and false negatives would be randomly distributed throughout my sample, I don't envision that they would skew my results. If anything, they should increase the level of randomness and thereby lessen the power of the effects that I find.

This method of using keywords or other text-embedded clues to identify texts which contain a construct of interest is presently a common method of identifying textual frames (Chong and Druckman 2007). I relied substantially on the framing literature to guide my development of a keyword dictionary that would allow me to select texts containing a heroic frame. For the most part, scholars use computer-assisted text analysis methods to identify frames look for clusters of words which are likely to be used in the context of their frame of interest. One of the more common approaches to identifying textual frames has been for a human coder to preemptively propose keywords which, in her opinion, are most likely to evoke the frame. A related practice involves mixing human and computational identification of relevant words for a keyword dictionary.

B. Dan Wood and his colleagues (2005) provide a good model for employing a combination of human and machine-based keyword extraction in their study of the effects of presidential optimism about the economy. Wood et al processed an extremely large database made up of over 75,000 documents and found all sentences in which the speaker mentioned the economy. They then listed all of the unique words contained in those sentences and human coders read the list to identify the words of interest – in this case, words expressing optimism and pessimism. Using the human-coded list of optimistic and pessimistic words as a new keyword search, they evaluated whether the optimistic and pessimistic keywords accurately reflected the tone of the sentence, removed those keywords that didn't accurately predict sentence tone, and then checked their list once more. When their keyword list was validated, they ran it through their documents once more to develop a full index of optimistic and pessimistic sentences which they then used as their measure of presidential optimism.

My project required that I create a dictionary-based proxy for the heroic narrative – rather than simply measure affective valence as in Wood et al – so my keyword list development was both more complicated and more subjective. I began with a consideration of the heroic ideal, determining after some research into conceptions of heroism that I would include words which evoked the following heroic traits: strength, determination, selflessness, courage, virtuousness and bellicosity. I then needed a set of specific keywords to test and here followed Wood et al in deriving these words from representative texts rather than creating a list a priori. However, rather than beginning with the texts that I planned to analyze I instead followed the suggestion made by Laver and Garry (2000) to use separate reference texts to develop keyword lists in order to avoid problems with endogeneity.

I sought to make my definition of heroic rhetoric as universal as possible so chose two highly disparate reference texts: Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1941 "Four Freedoms" speech and three of Tony Blair's 2006 speeches on foreign policy, both appended at the end of this project as

Appendix A. These two reference texts were attractive to me because I knew that they would fall outside of the time frame from which I planned to draw the texts I would use in my hypotheses tests. Moreover, they represented two ends of the spectrum in terms of what kinds of expectations I might have about the use of heroic rhetoric. Roosevelt’s speech represents a famous example of heroic imagery on the brink of American commitment to World War II. Blair’s speeches, meanwhile, showed no reason to develop any particular expectation about the level of heroic rhetoric they might contain. Although Blair took foreign policy as his subject in these speeches, the UK was not commencing any major military operations at the time he spoke and so there was no reason to believe that he would need to speak in a particularly persuasive way. If these speeches carried a degree of heroic rhetoric, it would be the heroic rhetoric of everyday foreign policy speech – average heroic rhetoric, a kind of baseline of the use of heroic imagery under normal conditions. These two texts thereby represented both conditions in which I would have high expectations of a leader using heroic framing and in which I would have lower expectations of the leader using heroic framing. Words used in these two texts could presumably help me uncover heroic imagery under both urgent and less-urgent conditions, in line with my assumption that heroic imagery exists as a constant tool of presidential rhetoric, rather than existing solely for the purpose of preparing a nation for immediate war-fighting. To my surprise, I actually found substantial overlap between the two texts in terms of rhetorical themes. Both texts meditated on the battle between opposing moral forces, respectively labeled “freedom” or “democracy” and “tyranny”, as well as identifying the real goal as being not merely the defeat of the enemy but the achievement of sweeping goals of ending global poverty and providing global health and security. Finding these similarities reinforced my belief that heroic rhetoric is a consistent tool in a leader’s rhetorical toolbox and not one which is only pulled out in extreme circumstances.

I took my reference texts and created a list of all of the unique words contained in both. Starting from the most-frequently-mentioned and going towards the least-frequently-mentioned words, I identified all words that I felt described one of my trait categories, including words describing the other two main varieties of character in the heroic narrative – villains and victims – and also words which I felt evoked the narrative elements of the hero’s journey (e.g., “call” or “path”). Finally, in order to ensure that I would capture all of the variants of my keywords, I took the root of most of my selected words and added a “wildcard” symbol (\*) to include all variations on each word root in my search results.

### *Heroic Rhetoric Dictionary*

bellicose	conquer*
aggress* (e.g., aggressive, aggression)	crush*
assail*	defeat*
attack*	defend*
battle*	destroy*
beat*	enemies
blood*	enemy
brutal*	fight*
carnage	fought
conflict	peace*
confront*	protect

punch  
repress\*  
safe\*  
strife  
struggle\*  
tough  
vengeance  
victor\*  
war  
warrior  
warriors  
wars

courageous  
brave\*  
confiden\*  
courag\*  
danger\*  
gallant  
mettle  
risk\*  
selfless\*  
spirit\*"

determined  
belief\*  
commit  
committed  
commitment  
destiny  
devot\*  
duty  
faith  
hope\*  
inhuman\*  
resolve\*  
surrender\*  
tireless\*"  
true

enemy  
authoritarian  
barbari\*  
cruel  
darkness  
evil  
hatr\*  
horror  
infam\*  
injust\*  
monster  
monstrous

murder\*  
savage\*  
shock\*  
terrible  
traged\*  
tragic  
tyran\*"  
wicked\*

hero's journey  
calling  
hero\*  
journey\*  
mission  
road  
the call  
strong  
power\*  
streng\*  
strong\*  
vigo\*

victims  
afflict\*  
degrading  
exploited  
frighten\*  
helpless  
humanit\*  
innocen\*  
liberat\*  
mankind\*  
oppressed  
poor  
victim\*

virtu\*  
bless\*  
fair\*  
free\*"  
god  
holy  
ideal\*"  
justice  
liberty  
light  
moral  
principle\*  
relig\*  
righteous  
values

After compiling my initial iteration of my keyword list, I performed a preliminary validation by using it to perform an analysis on unreviewed texts. To perform my searches I used Yoshikoder, a free content analysis program with an easy, intuitive interface.<sup>19</sup> Among other functions, Yoshikoder returns a measure of the proportion of analyzed texts that is made up of words from a keyword list (which I will henceforth refer to as a “dictionary.”) While this number is in itself meaningless, it is meaningful in relation to other documents measured in the same way.

In order to determine whether my dictionary was valid, I took a sample of domestic and foreign policy speeches given between 1980 and 2005 from the Public Papers of the Presidents document archive. I then evaluated by eye whether the documents that were scored as having a high proportion of heroic rhetoric did in fact seem to contain a greater than average amount of heroic rhetoric. Initially, the largest problem I faced was removing false positives which were based on words included in official program titles or writing conventions which were not intentional rhetorical choices by the speaking president. For example, although I initially included the word “security” in my dictionary, I had to remove it because of the confounding effect of presidential mentions of “Social Security.” However, I also determined that I would need to accept a certain degree of false positives, because several of the words I felt were necessary for the theoretical fit with my concept had multiple meanings. “Call”, for example, is a word which presidents frequently use in the sense in which I mean it (i.e., “The nation has been called.”) However, it is also used to describe more prosaic telephone calls between the president and other people, as well as in reference to domestic law regulating telecommunications. Because I assume that these false positives will be randomly distributed, I believe that including them will weaken any effect I am able to find but should not create a separate, confounding effect.

A different problem I faced concerned the inclusion of the category of keywords referring to “bellicosity,” one of the heroic traits I sought to capture through keyword search. I was concerned that the mere discussion of war could be driving my findings of heroic rhetoric and that my construct could simply be conflated with mentions of war. To check this, I evaluated my dictionary by analyzing a set of texts both with and without the “bellicose” dictionary category. I found that the bellicose category generally co-varied with the rest of the dictionary – which is to say that if a text contained a high proportion of bellicose words, it typically contained a high proportion of words from the other dictionary categories as well – and that removing the category therefore did not substantially change which documents were identified as having a high proportion of heroic rhetoric. Seeing this satisfied me that my effects were not being driven solely by mentions of war. Further, I felt that keeping the “bellicose” category in my dictionary was important for reasons of theory; the heroic image is intrinsically connected to the willingness to fight, and to omit that would leave the construct incomplete. However, as I do see this as being

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<sup>19</sup> Yoshikoder is available at <http://www.yoshikoder.org/>. I performed the analysis for this project with Yoshikoder version 0.6.3. As of this writing the newest version available is a preview build of 0.7.4.



an important issue to untangle, I will revisit this issue shortly in the context of some preliminary case studies.<sup>20</sup>

## Validation

I tried several iterations of the dictionary before feeling that I had achieved an acceptable balance of maintaining thematic breadth while removing most seriously confounding keywords. Then, I performed a more thorough validation of my dictionary to confirm that my dictionary-based machine coding was measuring something close to what I would identify through a human-coding effort. I selected twenty-five random documents from the Public Papers of the President and categorized them by eye, according to whether I felt they had no or little heroic imagery, a middling amount of heroic imagery, or a significant amount of heroic imagery. I then ran the same group of texts through Yoshikoder using my heroic rhetoric dictionary.

Human and machine coding returned the same result approximately three-quarters of the time overall. However, the machine coding method produced particularly similar outcomes to human coding when identifying significant amounts of heroic rhetoric, where the two methods produced the same result over 90 percent of the time.<sup>21</sup> Based on these results, I decided that the keyword-based search was likely to be a satisfactory substitute for hand-coding these categories of heroic imagery within my texts, particularly for the broad categories of “significant amount of heroic rhetoric” versus “little or middling amounts of heroic rhetoric.”

## Creating a Corpus

To this point, I felt that I had developed a suitable method for deriving the amount of heroic rhetoric from a particular speech. I next developed a method to expand my heroic rhetoric variable to match the time period I wished to examine – every day from 1981 to 2005. To do this, I needed to create a corpus of presidential speeches to use as material to analyze with my heroic rhetoric dictionary. Because I wanted to be able to make daily-level observations about the effects of heroic rhetoric on media and political outcomes, I needed a broader set of documents than just major addresses like the State of the Union address. However, I didn’t want to indiscriminately include every single document put out by the White House. I needed rules to develop a corpus in line with the expectations I had for the variable I planned to derive from it; to study “presidential rhetoric” specifically, I wanted to include only communications from the president which would be likely to contain some rhetorical content. Unfortunately, neither the category “presidential” nor “rhetoric” has clear, unequivocal boundaries. There is no

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<sup>20</sup> One final – if smaller – issue I confronted was the decision regarding whether I should include the word “terror” in my dictionary or not. I decided not to, for reasons which are elaborated in the Note at the end of this chapter.

<sup>21</sup> The data from this validation is available in the appendix.

unadulterated “presidential authorship” when the president’s work is created by speechwriters and advisors and when multiple administrative agencies are all using these conduits in their effort to communicate through the president’s speech (Collier 2006, Sigelman 2002). Similarly, all documents contain rhetoric, as they all feature at least some minimal aspect of persuasion. Both of these categories must therefore be carefully defined in order to be used meaningfully.

Starting from the full collection of documents available from the White House, I used specific selection rules to create an appropriate set of documents. The president's office produces thousands of documents a year which fall within the category of “public papers”; the source I used to download these documents was the web-based Public Papers of the Presidents collection of the American Presidency Project, a project developed by John Woolley and Gerhard Peters based at the University of California at Santa Barbara.<sup>22</sup> The Public Papers of the Presidents collection contains “most of the President's public messages, statements, speeches, and news conference remarks. Documents such as Proclamations, Executive Orders, and similar documents that are published in the Federal Register and Code of Federal Regulations...are included beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter (1977).” A major reason that I am beginning my study in 1981 concerns the availability of electronic text-based versions of key documents – in this case, newspaper coverage, which is electronically available mainly from 1980. As I further discovered when I began working with the Public Papers database, the Carter administration titled presidential documents in a way that was inconsistent with all following administrations, so it was, in fact, easier to begin with the first year of the Reagan administration; I thus collected documents from dates beginning with Reagan's inauguration in 1981. I chose 2005 as a final year in order to have a full 25 years of data.

I then determined a method for choosing which documents could be considered sufficiently “rhetorical” for inclusion in my corpus. Before downloading all of the documents from each year, I found that the beginning of the title of presidential documents offered useful information about the kind of content one could expect each document to have. Since 1981, presidential documents are listed in the Public Papers of the President with titles beginning with the following words:

Addresses	Executive Orders
Announcements	Fact Sheets
Appointments	Interviews
Backgrounders	Joint Statements/Communiques
Citations	Letters
Declarations	Memorandums
Determinations	Messages
Directives	News Conferences
Excerpts of Exchanges/Remarks/Addresses	Nominations
Exchanges	Notices

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<sup>22</sup> Available online at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/>, This site maintains a document archive that replicates the contents of the Office of the Federal Register publication series from 1913 to present.

Press Conferences  
Press Gaggles  
Press Briefings  
Proclamations  
Radio Addresses

Remarks  
Statements  
Videotape Remarks/Addresses  
Written Responses to Questions

Both formal and informal rules govern the naming of these documents. When I contacted the White House Office of the Press Secretary to request more information about the naming conventions of presidential documents, I was informed that the documents just “were” what they were called: that a proclamation “was” a proclamation, a declaration “was” a declaration, and so forth.<sup>23</sup> This confirmed my sense that each document’s title offered an important guide to what it contained. People who worked with these documents are likely to glean important information from their titles, to the extent of defining what kind of legal or administrative significance the document was believed to have. Choosing to infer the rhetorical content of documents based on their titles was likely to be an acceptable shortcut in deciding which documents contained sufficient rhetorical content for inclusion in my corpus.

I used these titles to help determine which documents were likely to contain what I considered to be “rhetoric” as opposed to procedural, legalistic speech. This as an extremely complicated issue, yet one that I needed to face because of my sense in reading the documents that some documents represented interesting, persuasive language and some documents were stilted, rote formulations produced to the specifications of a law.<sup>24</sup> However, as many scholars have observed, rhetoric – speech intended to persuade, or the persuasive aspect of speech – can

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<sup>23</sup> Author’s phone interview with staff at the Office of the White House Press Secretary, March 23, 2009.

<sup>24</sup> There is an interesting research program which looks into presidential efforts to expand presidential power through using forms of presidential speech which are “hidden in plain sight.” Lawmaking can occur publicly yet without attention through the president’s use of forms of presidential speech which are viewed as routine and not newsworthy, and which thus trigger less attention than expanding presidential powers through more regular and surveilled methods like Executive Orders or through a presidential legislative initiative. The use of signing statements is one example of this kind of act, since presidents can abrogate special powers to themselves by declaring their opposition to certain provisions of bills which they sign into law (Kelley and Marshall 2008.) However, signing statements have actually received fairly regular news coverage compared to other varieties of presidential speech which scholars have also noted to provide opportunities for creative presidents to abrogate powers without being noticed: the use of proclamations to create new rules in international trade or to create federal parks over Congressional opposition (Rottinghaus and Maier 2007), the use of memoranda to change controversial domestic laws (Cooper 2001), and even the use of the appointment process to expand an entrenched partisan corps of civil servants (Aberbach and Rockman 2009).

exist in or be read into any human utterance.<sup>25</sup> Persuasion is particularly omnipresent in political speech, which can itself be defined as speech intended to influence people during the process of making collective decisions between socially-significant alternatives. Even where a text's form is entirely governed by rules, such as when a president conveys a message to Congress transmitting an executive order or in accordance with some other reporting requirement, these messages are still a form of political expression and could still be conveyed in such a way as to create a persuasive effect, if the president wished to do so.

Thus, since all political speech could be considered to be potentially persuasive, it is helpful to add the further condition that there be an expectation that a text will reach a public audience. Again, it is true any message has the theoretical potential to reach a public audience. Yet the very existence of a set of "Public Papers," which contains only a negotiated subset of the president's total communication, underscores the reality that "public speech" is already leaving out quite a bit of the president's total meaningful communication. The president undoubtedly makes a number of private persuasive appeals every day. Many of these messages probably contain some interesting examples of presidential rhetoric, but unfortunately they are generally not available to us. Private messages are thus one subset of presidential rhetoric that is already excluded from this analysis. However, of the public papers, some kinds of message – like messages in fulfillment of reporting requirements, or presidential appointments – exist solely because they are required by law, and so while it is possible that the president could theoretically try to make them into persuasive messages, he is very unlikely to do so. The media that report on presidential speech are aware that these messages are formulaic, routine messages and are unlikely to view them as newsworthy.

Because I wanted to limit my corpus to texts which I expected to have some rhetorical impact, I therefore decided to exclude certain types of documents which I viewed as being so formulaic that they were apparently crafted with no intention of receiving public attention; this list included Appointments and Nominations,<sup>26</sup> Messages to Congress which transmit treaties or reports in compliance with reporting requirements, and Statements of Administration Policy.<sup>27</sup> I decided to keep all other presidential documents for analysis as presidential rhetoric.

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<sup>25</sup> The question of the effects of *all* speech – the degree to which each utterance itself is a performative act – has been extensively examined in the linguistics community (e.g., Austin, Searle, Wittgenstein, Foucault, Derrida, Butler.) In the sense in which many of these scholars understand communication, all utterances perform many rhetorical functions. This is likely particularly the case for presidential language, all of which is heard and taken seriously by a large number of people. However, my study concerns a much more limited meaning of rhetorical effect, and so I here simply note my recognition of this alternative.

<sup>26</sup> The nominations and appointments may themselves be noteworthy, but the official statements which announce them adhere to a strict formula; the rhetoric, I therefore determined, was unlikely to make a separate contribution to public interest in the text.

<sup>27</sup> These are composed in legislative language and are intended for legal review (Thurber 2001).

It is, of course, very difficult to tell with many presidential documents whether they were recorded with an expectation of receiving public attention. Memoranda and proclamations, for instance, are public documents and are often written with strong and persuasive language. However, their presentation is not in a public, ceremonial forum – such as in the case of the State of the Union message – so they are much less certain of receiving media coverage. However, scholars of presidential rhetoric have claimed that a great majority of presidential statements on foreign policy get covered in the press (see Mitrook 2003 for review) and so even if the immediate effect is less obvious than the effect of the State of the Union, the cumulative effect of the less-popular presidential documents might end up being substantial, particularly for the more routine daily coverage of presidential activities.

In addition to information about a document's likely rhetorical content, the titles of presidential documents sometimes also contain information about my second condition for inclusion – that it be speech “authored” in some significant way by the president. I elected to define presidential speech as documents which: a) explicitly attribute the text to the president by using the president's name followed by a colon at the beginning of the speech or implicitly attribute authorship to the president by use of the otherwise-unattributed first-person singular within the text, b) were not otherwise noted to be spoken by a spokesperson or issued by a corporate entity like “the White House”; and c) were produced during a year that the person speaking was actually president.<sup>28</sup> If the text was presented by a spokesperson, that spokesperson is generally mentioned by name in the title of the Public Papers listing for that document. Where a non-specific entity like “White House” is credited with authorship of the document then this signifies a non-presidential authorship as well. Where there is no information about who authored the document in the title, the text is almost always attributed to the president within the text itself, with a couple of regular exceptions.<sup>29</sup> This condition resulted in my eliminating all documents with titles starting with the word “Backgrounder” or “Fact Sheet” as both kinds of texts seem to be compiled by White House staff. Spokespeople routinely lead Press Briefings, Gaggle, or Conferences so I included these texts only when they specifically noted the president's presence. Statements or Messages generally come from the president but are occasionally authored by others. Otherwise, I counted all other documents as being sufficiently authored by the president to be eligible for inclusion.

The authorship of joint texts – such as Joint Statements or Joint Communiques, which are communications from the president as well as another head of state, in addition to records from all press availabilities – created a slightly different sort of problem, as in these cases the president is certainly an author but is not the sole author of the text. Joint texts such as Joint Statements and Joint Communiques are truly jointly-authored texts in the sense that these texts

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<sup>28</sup>This last condition became necessary to include due to the fact that the Public Papers of the Presidents also contains certain speeches by presidential candidates, former presidents and presidents-elect.

<sup>29</sup> Regular exceptions include opposition responses to the Saturday Radio Addresses (which are attributed to a prominent member of the opposition party) and campaign speeches made by presidential candidates.

describe conclusions that the president and another head-of-state have reached together over the course of discussion. With regard to press availabilities – both group availabilities like Press Conferences and individual availabilities like Interviews – while there are reasons to move either towards inclusion or exclusion of these documents, I viewed the president as retaining substantial authorship in these situations. These documents devote more space to the president’s answers than to questions themselves and so the majority of the words in these texts are actually the president’s words; further, though presidents don’t have control over every question they hear, they do have control over whom they will permit to ask questions and how they answer those questions. As a result, although presidents aren’t literally speaking the questions they answer, by controlling the parameters of questioner and answer length they nonetheless chiefly control the substance of the press conference.

In all, my corpus comprised 22,451 individual presidential texts.

### Exploring Variation in the Use of Heroic Rhetoric

Once I had developed my corpus of speeches, I performed a content analysis on all included presidential speeches from 1981-2005, using my validated dictionary, in order to get a daily record of the president’s use of heroic rhetoric. This daily record of presidential heroic rhetoric in turn allowed me to examine some general characteristics of its use over time, including the testing of some general hypotheses about the heroic rhetoric a variable. To some extent these explorations are intended to demonstrate ecological validity, in order to show that the heroic rhetoric variable varies in line with conventional wisdom about who should use heroic rhetoric more frequently and under what conditions we expect it is likely be used. However, these explorations also help provide a basis for understanding why presidents choose to use heroic rhetoric.

Since my heroic rhetoric variable represents a new construct, I needed to find out whether it indeed functions well as a variable – whether it varies meaningfully over time and in different contexts. Some descriptive statistics can offer an overall sense of the ranges of this variable. The Yoshikoder content analysis program calculates the number of instances of words from my heroic dictionary present in each speech and divides the total number of words in the speech by this number; this produces a number reflecting the proportion of heroic rhetoric present in each speech. I use this number to determine whether a speech contains no, some, or significant heroic rhetoric. As shown in the histogram in Figure 3.1, the distribution of heroic rhetoric across all presidential speech is bimodal. About 5 percent of presidential speech contains no heroic rhetoric at all, but the remaining speeches are distributed around a mode of 0.010. The form of the frequency of this variable is determined partly by a “floor effect” at zero – as one cannot count a negative number of words, one cannot have a negative proportion of heroic rhetoric – which stems from the fact that heroic rhetoric is essentially a type of count data. Frequencies are further constrained by the issue that in texts of several hundred words or less it is impossible to derive a proportion of less than around 0.004 which is not 0 – doing so would imply an amount of heroic rhetoric equal to a fraction of a single word. Overall, the distribution of proportions of heroic



rhetoric somewhat resembles a Poisson curve, which is a common form for count data.<sup>30</sup> Because of the “long tail” on the variable, the median – 0.013 – and mean – 0.017 – are substantially larger than the mode.

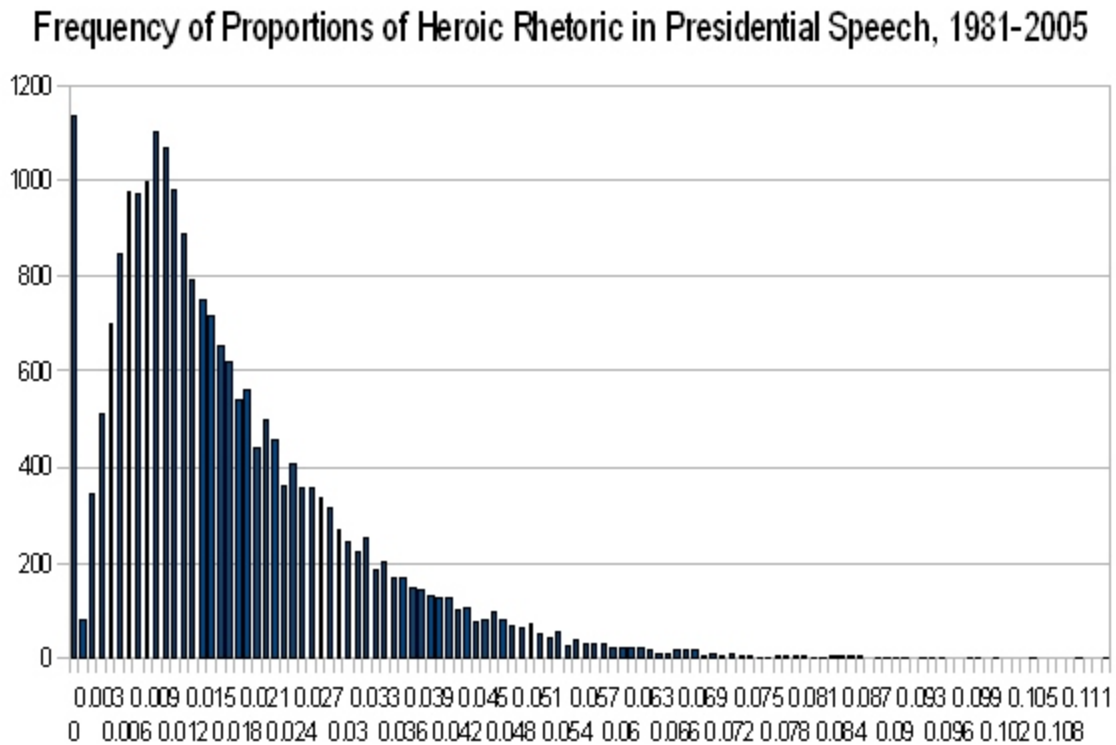


Figure 3.1

The proportions of heroic rhetoric in presidential speeches go to a maximum of 0.11 – that is, 11 percent of the speech with the highest proportion of heroic rhetoric is made up of words from my heroic rhetoric dictionary.<sup>31</sup> However, I do not expect that the effectiveness of heroic rhetoric will increase in a one-to-one fashion alongside increases in the proportion of heroic rhetoric. Instead, I imagine that audiences might be sensitive to the difference between high levels, moderate levels, and the absence of heroic rhetoric. Therefore, I will consider the more relevant form of the variable to be its categorization into high, some, and no heroic rhetoric. Based on my earlier

<sup>30</sup> The Poisson distribution does not exactly fit this variable, because its variance is too small (0.00017, as opposed to the expected 0.01.) However, since I am not using the variable in this particular form to perform any inferential statistical tests, this doesn’t pose a problem here. I will return to this issue in my tests of agenda-setting hypotheses.

<sup>31</sup> The speech containing the highest proportion of heroic rhetoric in my corpus was Ronald Reagan’s “Statement on the Observance of National Peace Through Strength Week” of September 22, 1984. As suggested by its level of heroic rhetoric, the text is essentially just a string of words evoking heroic themes connected by the grammatically-necessary parts of speech.

definition of significant amounts of heroic rhetoric, I consider any speech with a proportion of heroic rhetoric of 0.02 or higher to contain significant heroic rhetoric. I consider a speech containing no words from my heroic rhetoric dictionary to have no heroic rhetoric, and anything falling between these boundaries contains some heroic rhetoric. The number of speeches fitting into these categories is presented below.

	Number of speeches	Percent of all speeches
All speeches	22451	100%
No heroic rhetoric	1138	5%
Some heroic rhetoric	14326	64%
Significant heroic rhetoric	6988	31%

Table 3.1

Table 3.1 demonstrates that there is a reasonable range of variation between the categories of “no”, “some” and “significant” heroic rhetoric, with approximately a third of the speeches in my corpus containing high proportions of heroic rhetoric and a little more than two-thirds of the speeches containing some or no heroic rhetoric. The existence of meaningful variation in this variable is a prerequisite for observing variation in its effects.

Now, while the overall picture of this variable demonstrates the overall range of variation of this variable, it doesn’t give a sense of the more interesting form of variation of heroic rhetoric – the variation in presidential use of heroic rhetoric over time. Variation in the presidential use of heroic rhetoric between 1981 and 2005 helps us see trends in the degree of heroic rhetoric each president employed during his tenure. These trends represent the rhetorical tendencies specific to each president during his time in office, including their habitual or base levels of heroic rhetoric, their intentional elevations of their level of rhetoric in the interest of generating public support, and their rhetorical responses to the important political events they encountered while in office. Because the trend in presidential use of heroic rhetoric can be measured in a variety of ways, I am going to present several ways of visualizing the overall yearly trend.

Figure 3.2 represents the trend in the annual use of heroic rhetoric between 1981 and 2005 in two ways: through presenting of the number of speeches in which the president used significant heroic rhetoric as well as the proportion of total presidential speeches per year in which he used significant heroic rhetoric. This combination of trends demonstrates that while there has been an overall positive trend in the use of significant heroic rhetoric over time, one must also consider that presidents give (or at least record in their Public Papers) an increasing number of speeches per year.<sup>32</sup> This difference could be important in terms of predicting the effects of each speech with significant amounts of heroic rhetoric. Moreover, it creates two

<sup>32</sup> The “proportion” line was created by finding the percent of all presidential speeches for each year which used significant heroic rhetoric and then multiplying this number by 1000 in order to produce a trend line easily interpreted alongside the speech total trend line.

distinct images of the trend of heroic rhetoric over the period 1981-2005: either there has been a positive, linear trend in the tendency of presidents to use heroic rhetoric, or there is a more complicated, less linear trend, marked by greater use of heroic rhetoric in the middle years of the Reagan presidency, a decline in the GHW Bush and Clinton years, and then a dramatically heightened use of heroic rhetoric during the tenure of GW Bush. This second interpretation is also what one would infer from yet one other method of assessing the trend in the president's use of heroic rhetoric – the annual average proportion of heroic rhetoric used per speech (Figure 3.3.)

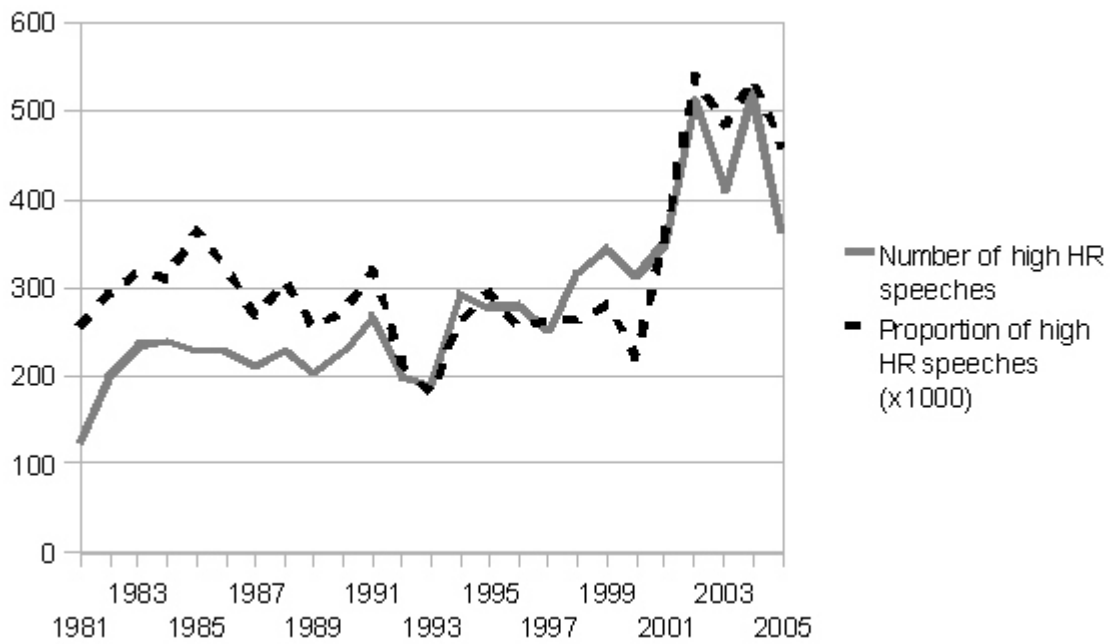


Figure 3.2

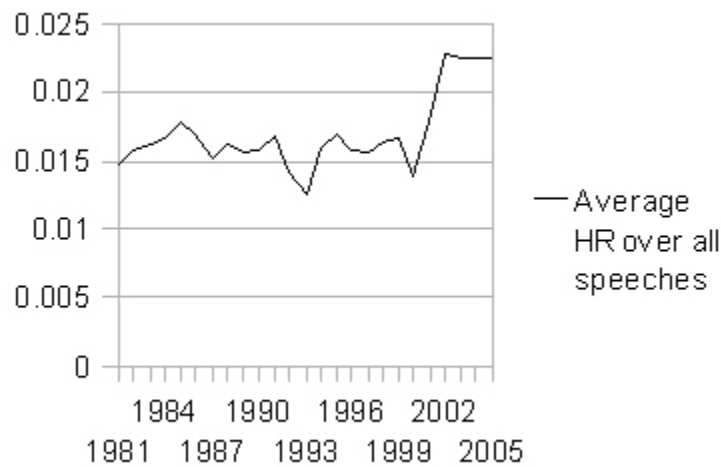


Figure 3.3

Under either interpretation, however, there is a clear and dramatic increase in the use of heroic rhetoric which coincides with the presidency of GW Bush, but also with the period following the September 11, 2001 attacks. Looking more closely at 2001, it is evident that it is indeed in September when a dramatic change occurs in the amount of heroic rhetoric Bush incorporated into his speeches. While during the first eight months of his presidency Bush had an average proportion of heroic rhetoric per speech of 0.015 – which is very close to the mean amount of heroic rhetoric used per speech for the entire time period – the average proportion of heroic rhetoric in his speeches rises to 0.025 for the remainder of 2001. This identification of a dramatic, heroic shift in presidential rhetoric is similar to what was found when Michelle Bligh and her colleagues (2004) studied the six-month period following September 11 and found that Bush’s speech became considerably more “charismatic.”<sup>33</sup>

In addition to raising the question of whether GW Bush’s language made him appear more charismatic, the post-September 11 change in rhetoric suggests the significance of international conflict events in the use of heroic rhetoric. However, a somewhat surprising result that is evident from the overall trend of presidential use of heroic rhetoric is that it is not all that strongly associated with war periods as measured by the actual engagement of troops in battle. If we consider the major US military actions of the period 1981-2005, the list would include the October 1983 invasion of Grenada, the December 1989 invasion of Panama, the 1990-1991 Gulf War, the 1992-1993 joint intervention in Somalia, the 1994-1995 invasion of Haiti, the 1995 joint intervention in Bosnia, the 1999 US-led intervention in Kosovo, the 2001 Afghanistan War and the 2003 Iraq War.<sup>34</sup> This list, representing only the most significant and publicized military engagements of the period, is far from exhaustive. Nonetheless, comparing this list against the trends shown in either Figure 3.2 or Figure 3.3 shows that it does not effectively predict overall trends in total heroic rhetoric. As I will examine in the next chapter, military conflicts do often predict increased presidential heroic rhetoric in speeches directly concerning countries with which the US is in conflict. However, this effect is not strong or regular enough to independently anticipate presidential heroic rhetoric across all subject domains.

By beginning to break down the subject domains, we do begin to see the outline of particular events. After looking at the trends in overall use of heroic rhetoric, I examined the hypothesis that presidents use heroic rhetoric more frequently in connection with foreign policy subjects than with domestic policy subjects.<sup>35</sup> I found this to be quite regularly the case. Figure

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<sup>33</sup> However, it is worth noting that Bush’s speech remained unusually and consistently high in heroic rhetoric for at least three more years, before beginning to reduce in intensity in 2005. Thus, we may consider this, if it is event-driven, to be both a September 11 and “Global War on Terror” effect on presidential rhetoric.

<sup>34</sup> A separate list could be made of air-only military engagements, including the 1986 bombing of Libya and the multiple periods of air attacks on Iraq between the first and second Gulf Wars.

<sup>35</sup> I divided all speeches in my corpus into two groups – “foreign policy” and “non-foreign policy” – depending on whether or not they contained at least one mention of another country.

3.4 compares the average proportion of heroic rhetoric, per year, in foreign policy and non-foreign policy speeches. The average amount of heroic rhetoric is reliably higher in speeches treating foreign policy subjects in every year under study. The differences between these two categories tend to be highest under the presidents who used the highest proportion of heroic rhetoric over all – Reagan and GW Bush – which suggests that much of the difference in their increased use of heroic rhetoric may be attributed to an increase in their use of heroic rhetoric with reference to foreign policy subjects. This same interpretation can be derived from the information displayed in Figure 3.5, which compares the annual proportion of foreign policy speeches, relative to all foreign policy speeches, which are high in heroic rhetoric with the proportion of non-foreign policy speeches, relative to all non-foreign policy speeches, which are high in heroic rhetoric. (Again, the September 11/Global War on Terror effect is evident in the dramatic increase in the proportion of foreign policy speeches containing heroic rhetoric that begins in 2001.) From these comparisons, it seems clear that there is a greater tendency for the president to use heroic rhetoric when he is discussing foreign policy than when he is discussing domestic policy. To some extent, however, we could imagine that we would get this result merely a product of the design of the dictionary. The heroic rhetoric dictionary includes the “bellicosity” category, which contains items like “war” and “attack.” While these

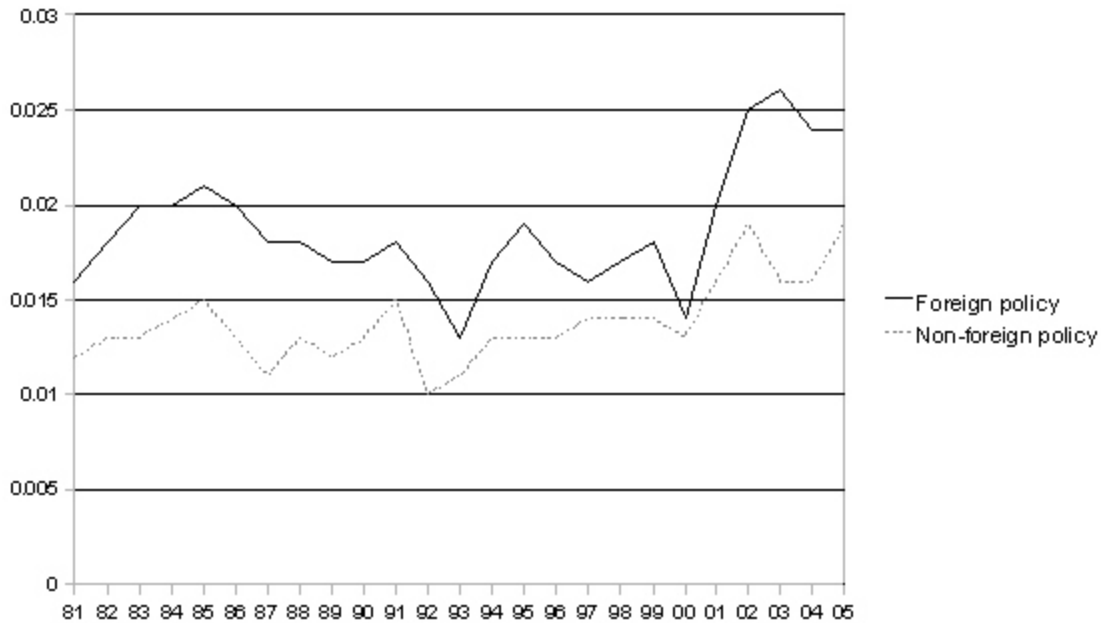


Figure 3.4

This is certainly an imperfect way of measuring speech content; however, I believe that it is, if anything, a hard case for my hypothesis as I have inevitably included many “false positives” into my foreign policy category (that is, I have likely included domestic policy speeches in which another country happened to be mentioned.)

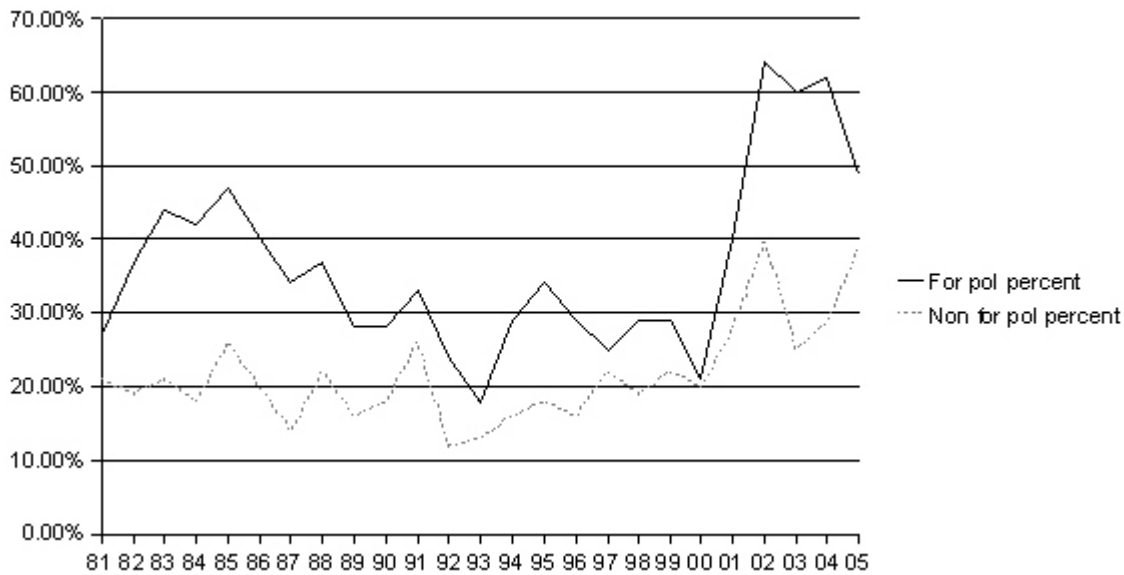


Figure 3.5

words can be used metaphorically in any context (e.g., a cultural “War on Christmas,” a campaign “attack” ad), they do have a literal, common and frequently-invoked meaning within the context of international conflict. Thus, even without intentionally evoking a heroic image, any text which discusses this category of events should result in a higher proportion of heroic rhetoric, as defined by my dictionary.

So is the fact that the heroic rhetoric dictionary is more likely to identify high levels of heroic rhetoric in foreign policy speech an artefact of my dictionary construction or a genuine finding of greater heroic rhetoric? My belief is that this is an authentic and appropriate finding, for two reasons. The first is that while including the “bellicosity” category does help increase the difference between the average amount of heroic rhetoric in foreign policy relative to domestic policy speeches, it is not the only thing driving this difference. For example, in looking at Reagan’s speeches from 1986, I found that his foreign policy speeches contained an average proportion of heroic rhetoric of .021, while speeches which were not about foreign policy contained an average proportion of heroic rhetoric of .015. When I removed words contained in the “bellicose” category from the equation, Reagan’s foreign policy speeches still differed from his non-foreign policy speeches: under this condition, his foreign policy average was .014 and his non-foreign policy average was .011. The difference is not as stark, but it is still a substantial difference. Similarly, in the case of GW Bush’s speeches from 2005, the average proportion of heroic rhetoric in speeches about foreign policy was .024, while his average in non-foreign policy speeches was .019. When I removed words contained in the “bellicose” category from the equation his foreign policy average was .015 and his non-foreign policy average .013.

The second reason why I wish to include references to bellicosity in my measure of heroic rhetoric is that it is thematically central to the abstract notion of heroism; presidential mentions of fights, struggles, and attacks serve both concrete and abstract purposes. Even war itself can be both literal and abstract at the same time. The 2003 Gulf War, for example, could be seen as a



war to remove the unpredictable Iraqi leader from the presidency. This is a concrete, immediate goal for which success can be evaluated quite literally: Saddam Hussein ceased to be the Iraqi president. The Gulf War also was argued to be a war which had the purpose of liberating the Iraqi people and saving the US from the Iraqi threat. These goals are more abstract in the sense that while they do have meaning – and important, persuasive meaning – they don't actually connote any particular physical action unless they are much more clearly and concretely specified. Literal aspects of war can be distinguished from metaphorical aspects of war by using the test of identifying whether the goal or act describes something that is actionable and concrete, or something that is aspirational and diffusely defined. Similarly, public presidential speech about war can provide both immediate, concrete information about wartime events and can also weave a narrative around those events that creates a persuasive emotional context.

While it is possible to envision disentangling individual concrete from metaphorical sentences about war, the reality is that they are always presented together and so speech about war – even when it refers to an actual war – should also be examined as something which serves an important rhetorical function. In the case of my heroic rhetoric construct, the rhetorical function of bellicose language is to round out an image of heroism, to complete a characterization and narrative that is formed around a certain set of beliefs about conflict. The connection between heroic rhetoric and foreign policy is undoubtedly a complex one, but this is because of the way that it reflects the very complex entity which is presidential speech on foreign policy, which regularly mixes discussion of “real” events with idealized versions of those events, “real” individuals with idealized versions of those individuals, and “real” foreign policy decisions taken at the national level with idealized understandings of a metaphysical national mission. Thus, although there are somewhat complex reasons for why heroic rhetoric is used more often in connection with foreign policy, I feel that those reasons are legitimate enough to let stand my observation about the relative frequency of heroic rhetoric in connection with foreign versus domestic policy.

In addition to the difference between policy domains, I expected to find other regular differences in heroic rhetoric – particularly those connected to the role of heroic rhetoric in persuasion, the principal function of “rhetoric.” I wondered particularly about the electoral cycle, as I thought that heroic rhetoric might serve as an aspect of campaigning. I was somewhat surprised to find no apparent connection between heroic rhetoric and campaigning – that is, there was no apparent regular increase of heroic rhetoric during election years. However, there does appear to be a regular effect from the first year in office.

	Reagan	Bush	Clinton	GW Bush
First year ave.	0.014	0.015	0.012	0.018
2+ year ave.	0.017	0.016	0.015	0.023

Table 3.2

Presidents tended to use less heroic rhetoric during their first year in office than in subsequent years (Table 3.2). This was of course most noticeable during the GW Bush period of 2001-2005, but it was a trend that held for all other presidents during my study period as well. One reason for this may be the pressure that presidents are under to begin working on domestic policy as soon as they enter office; sensing that they have a limited period in which to spend the political capital

accumulated in their elections, they may initially focus on the kind of longer-term programmatic goals more characteristic of domestic than foreign policy (Light 1999). The decreased focus on domestic relative to foreign policy may drive my observation about presidents' relatively lower use of heroic rhetoric in their first year. A preliminary examination of the number of foreign policy speeches given by the presidents in my time period seems to support this hypothesis: in their first year in office, presidents appear to give fewer than average speeches about foreign policy.

### Variation in Heroic Rhetoric Over Time: Popularity or Persuasion?

This consideration of variation over time also lends itself to the investigation of hypotheses about some general reasons for why presidents use heroic rhetoric. As suggested by the charisma literature – and particularly by the Bligh et al study – heroic rhetoric may increase the degree to which a president is seen as charismatic. However, given that there is so much variation in presidential use of heroic rhetoric across time, there are reasons to suspect that this may not be the case, for if heroic rhetoric was so effective at creating the perception of charisma, presidents would likely use it constantly. Meanwhile, as a form of rhetoric, heroic rhetoric is a type of persuasive language. I will also investigate the possibility that the intention behind presidential use of heroic rhetoric lies more in persuasion around particular policy subjects than in increasing personal support.

Much of the literature on charisma measures public perception of presidential charisma by using presidential approval ratings. Here, using my heroic rhetoric variable, I can look at relationships between trends in presidential approval and trends in the use of heroic rhetoric to discover to what extent they co-vary. In order to have a method of comparing presidential approval ratings and heroic rhetoric, I compared both of these trends with their over-period average. To do this, after finding the average approval and average proportion of speeches high in heroic rhetoric for each year (a trend shown previously in Figure 3.2), I subtracted the average presidential approval for the period 1981-2005 (55.6%) from each annual observation of presidential approval and subtracted the average proportion of speeches high in heroic rhetoric for the period 1981-2005 (31.3%) from each annual observation of the proportion of speeches with significant heroic rhetoric. This gave me two trendlines both centered around their means, which can be observed in Figure 3.6.

Intriguingly, there does appear to be some correlation between these two trends.<sup>36</sup> However, the directionality of the relationship is unclear. Looking at the annual data points one can imagine where rhetoric may have helped to drive approval – such as the middle years of the first Reagan term – or where dropping approval may have stemmed the presidential use of heroic rhetoric, as appears to be happening in 2005. We can also see how events may have led to a decrease in both approval and the president's use of heroic rhetoric – as in the discovery of the Iran-Contra affair during the end of 1986 – or, conversely, where events may have led to an increase in both approval and the use of heroic rhetoric, as in the September 11 attacks.

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<sup>36</sup> The correlation coefficient of these two variables is 0.20.

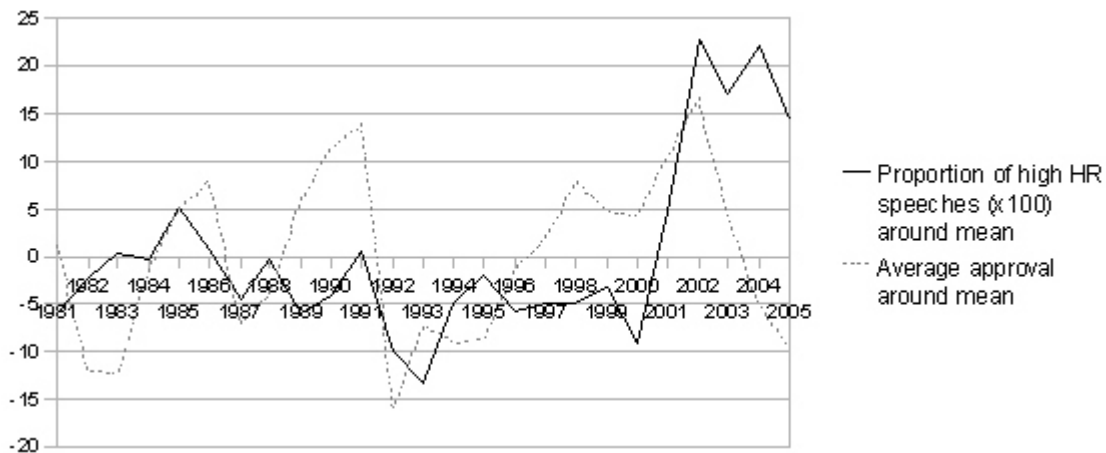


Figure 3.6

To see if I could discern any regular directionality in the relationship between heroic rhetoric and presidential approval ratings, I examined a set of State of the Union addresses, as this annual speech is frequently bracketed by substantial presidential approval polling. I looked at all State of the Union addresses for the period 1981-2005, excluding each president's first year in office (since the approval numbers preceding each president's first State of the Union address, reflecting just a couple of weeks of tenure in office, didn't seem directly comparable to the polls from other years). In order to compare presidential approval ratings with heroic rhetoric, I centered both variables around a meaningful average and then scaled them to comparable dimensions: for presidential approval ratings, I did this by subtracting 50 points from the percent of people answering that the president was doing a good job in the last Gallup poll preceding the address, and for the proportion of heroic rhetoric of the State of the Union address, I subtracted from the proportion of heroic rhetoric in the address the average proportion of heroic rhetoric in all presidential speeches that year, and then multiplied that amount by 1000. Figure 3.7 displays my comparison of the trend in presidential use of heroic rhetoric in State of the Union addresses with presidential approval ratings in the poll immediately preceding the State of the Union address. The correlation between these two variables is reasonably high, at 0.49; the negative correlation between the president's use of heroic rhetoric and presidential disapproval rates is even higher at -0.54.<sup>37</sup> It seems possible that higher approval ratings embolden presidents to use more heroic rhetoric than they otherwise might.

<sup>37</sup> I elected not to show this trend in graph form because as a negative correlation, the relationship is less visually informative.

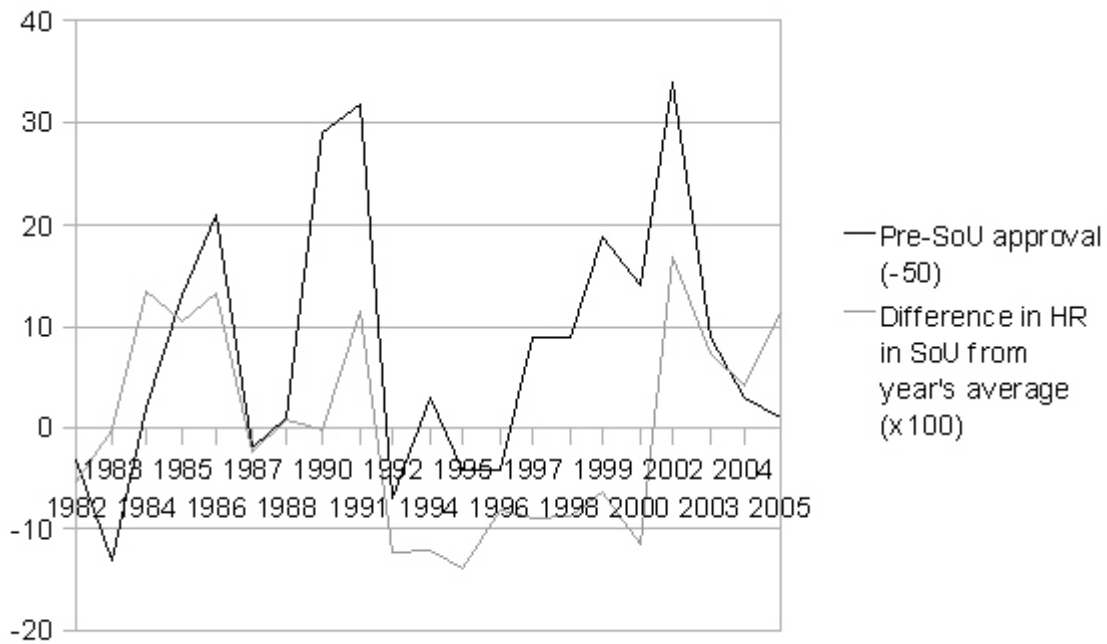


Figure 3.7

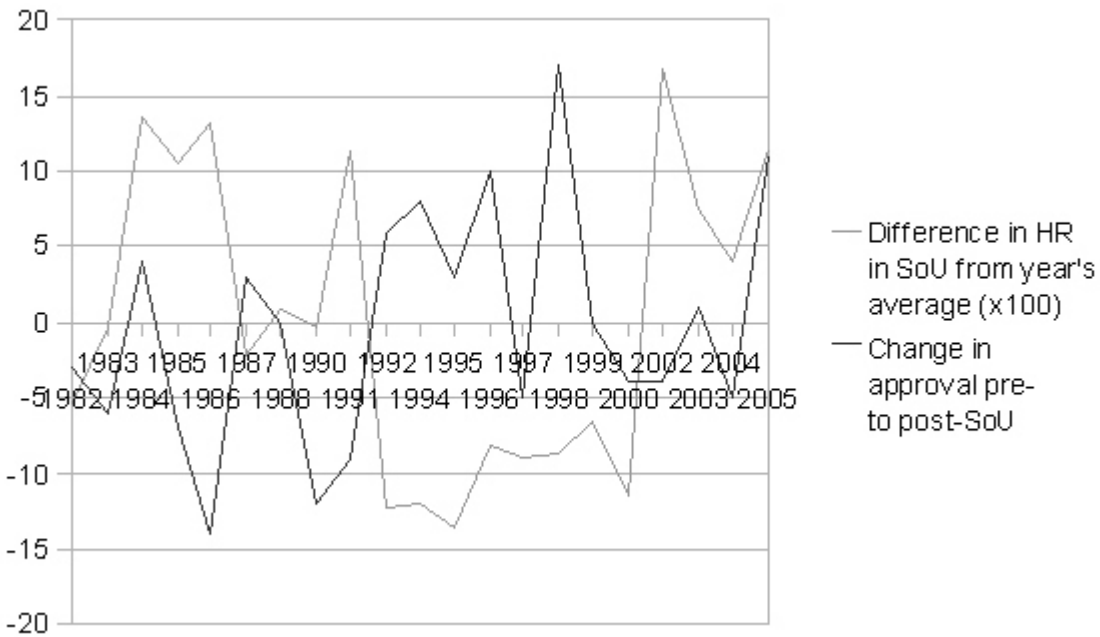


Figure 3.8

Meanwhile, Figure 3.8 displays my comparison of trends intended to show the effect of heroic rhetoric in the State of the Union address on presidential approval. Here, I have used the same

speech variable that was used in Figure 3.7; however, now it is paired with a trendline which demonstrates the annual change in presidential approval between the last poll taken before the president's address and the first poll taken after the president's address.<sup>38</sup> The correlation between heroic rhetoric in the State of the Union address and the change in presidential approval is not as strong as the correlation between heroic rhetoric in the address and pre-address approval (although it is still good at -0.44). Moreover, the relationship is actually negative, which means that if there is an effect on approval from the use of heroic rhetoric, it is not a simple matter of increasing presidential approval ratings: the use of heroic rhetoric in these addresses seems not to help the president, at least in the short term.<sup>39</sup> Overall, comparing these two trends suggests that while approval – or perceptions of charisma – may increase the president's use of heroic rhetoric, the reverse was not supported.

Given the lack of evidence for the hypothesis that a general increase in heroic rhetoric will increase perceptions of presidential charisma, I will now examine the possibility that heroic rhetoric is employed with the intention of increasing presidential persuasiveness. At this point, as I am not looking to see whether heroic rhetoric *is* persuasive, as that is a more complicated outcome to measure than presidential popularity. However, by looking at the characteristics of speeches in which the president chooses to use heroic rhetoric we can infer whether heroic rhetoric is being used within the context of a larger persuasive effort by the president.

I first examined the use of heroic rhetoric within public addresses. Kernell's theory of "going public," as reviewed in the previous chapter, describes the president's decision to "go public" in advocating for a particular issue as reflecting his desire to coerce recalcitrant legislators into supporting his preferred policies. Thus, "going public" represents a mode of persuasion: first, it is intended to persuade citizens to support the president's preferred policy – and possibly to persuade them to contact their representatives and to voice their support for the president; and second, it is intended to directly and indirectly persuade opposing legislators to change their positions on the policy.

"Going public" can be – and has been – defined in a broad variety of ways (Eshbaugh-Soha 2005). In this case, I will again use the speech title categories to define "going public" by considering all speeches titled "addresses" to be a particularly public form of speech. Addresses include both routine scheduled addresses like the State of the Union address and the Saturday radio address as well as occasional addresses on particular subjects of interest to the president.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> To calculate total change in presidential approval, I subtracted pre-address approval from post-address approval and subtracted post-address disapproval from pre-address disapproval and then added these numbers together.

<sup>39</sup> This may also reflect something specific about the State of the Union address, where perhaps audiences are looking to reflect comfortably on the country's situation and not be roused to heroic action.

<sup>40</sup> Saturday radio addresses have become a regular aspect of presidential rhetoric since Ronald Reagan's 1982 resurrection of this speech form which intentionally hearkened back to Roosevelt's "Fireside Chats." Only GHW Bush did not use this speech opportunity.

State of the Union addresses and occasional addresses are broadcast nationally and while Saturday radio addresses receive no television coverage they are also broadcast nationally on the radio. The number of occasional addresses per year varies considerably from year to year, with some years witnessing only a couple of presidential occasional addresses and other years more than a dozen. All addresses are initiated by the president in the sense that they occur – with the possible exception of the State of the Union address – entirely at his discretion; in that sense, the decision to deliver an address occurs most likely as a result of a desire to “go public” on a political issue because the president has a strong interest in the issue and he is facing some actual or potential degree of opposition in Congress.<sup>41</sup> Figure 3.9 compares the annual average proportion of heroic rhetoric in presidential addresses with the average proportion of heroic rhetoric in foreign policy speeches and the average proportion of heroic rhetoric in non-foreign policy speeches. Presidential addresses routinely contain more heroic rhetoric than the average presidential speech, regardless of that speech’s policy domain. This suggests the synergistic use of heroic rhetoric in the context of a form of speech known to be commonly used in the interest of persuasion.

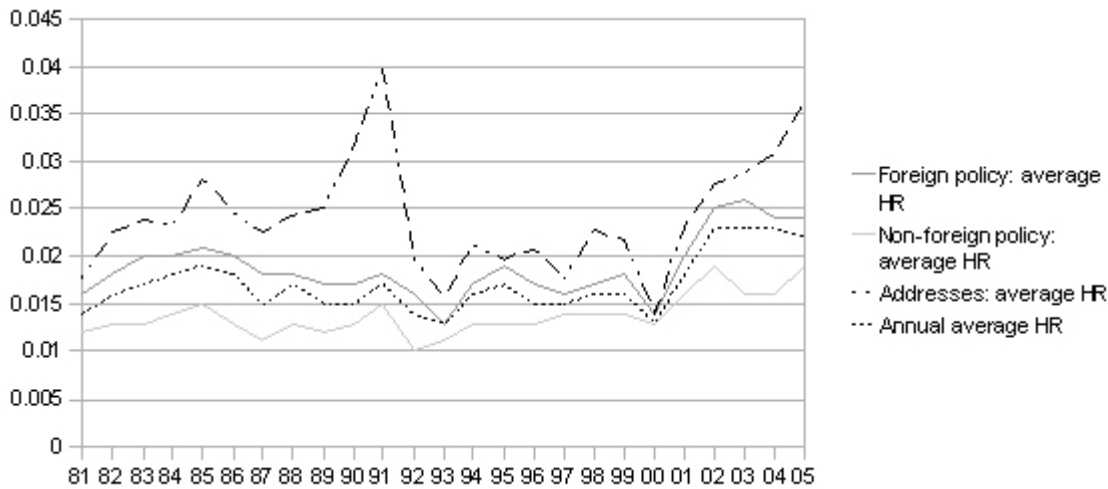


Figure 3.9

A second test provides further information about the intention lying behind the president’s use of heroic rhetoric. If presidents use heroic rhetoric with the intention of persuading, then they should use it more in connection with issues which they view to be political priorities. While the test above gets at this indirectly by assuming that presidents will only give addresses on subjects that are priorities, another way to identify which subjects are presidential priorities is by noting which subjects they are speak about during the State of the

<sup>41</sup> While most presidential addresses represent an effort to persuade the public to support a particular policy, a minority of addresses concern national tragedies which are seen to require a presidential response. I will describe the different patterns in overall presidential use of heroic rhetoric with regard to this kind of eulogistic (or epideictic) speech as opposed to its more common employment in the service of persuasive political rhetoric.



Union address, when presidents traditionally reveal their main political goals for the year. In order to have good coverage of presidential agenda-items over the course of my time-period, I will examine the use of heroic rhetoric in connection with issues that have been persistent presidential priorities: crime, education and health care. I selected these issues partly to follow in the model set by George Edwards and B. Dan Wood (1999), but also because I wished to create a test entirely separate from my more comprehensive examination of the use of heroic rhetoric in connection with foreign policy which is to follow in the coming chapters.

To identify the relative priority of these three areas, I determined the relative frequency with which each was mentioned in each State of the Union address between 1981 and 2005. I rated a subject as a low priority if it was not mentioned or mentioned only a couple of times over the course of the entire speech; I rated it a moderate priority if it was mentioned a few times and I rated it a high priority if it was mentioned ten or more times (this was not rare; high priority subjects could be mentioned more than forty times.) Meanwhile, to measure trends in presidential use of heroic rhetoric on each subject, I counted the number of speeches on each subject with significant heroic rhetoric delivered by the president each year. I divided this number by the total number of speeches made by the president that year, to control for the considerable variation in the total annual number of speeches, and then I divided this number by the annual proportion of speeches high in heroic rhetoric, to control for the presidents' individual variation in average use of heroic rhetoric.<sup>42</sup>

I found that there was a good level of correlation between the presidents' stated political priorities at the beginning of each year and their use of heroic rhetoric in connection with those priorities throughout the rest of the year. Figure 3.10 compares the degree of priority accorded to education in the State of the Union address each year with annual observations of the trend in the president's use of significant heroic rhetoric when talking about education. The two measurements correlate reasonably well at .56. Figure 3.11 compares the degree of priority accorded to crime in the State of the Union address each year with the trend in presidential use of heroic rhetoric in connection with crime; here, too, the measurements correlate well at .64. Figure 3.12 demonstrates the same comparison in the case of health care; here the two trends correlate especially well at .81.

While these charts do not demonstrate any particular effects from the president's use of heroic rhetoric, they do suggest that as a president increases his prioritization of a political issue he will also tend to increase his use of heroic rhetoric about that issue. Thus, while the hypothesis that presidents use heroic rhetoric as a means of increasing their popularity – their charisma – was not substantiated by the change in presidential approval following the State of the Union address, my hypothesis that presidents use heroic rhetoric as an aspect of persuasion was supported by a comparison of priorities in the State of the Union address with the president's relative use of heroic rhetoric in the context of those priorities.

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<sup>42</sup> I felt that controlling for these variations made sense as I was not seeking to determine whether there was an effect from the presidents' use of heroic rhetoric in connection with these subjects, but rather to see if they increased their own relative use of heroic rhetoric when an issue represented a particular political priority.

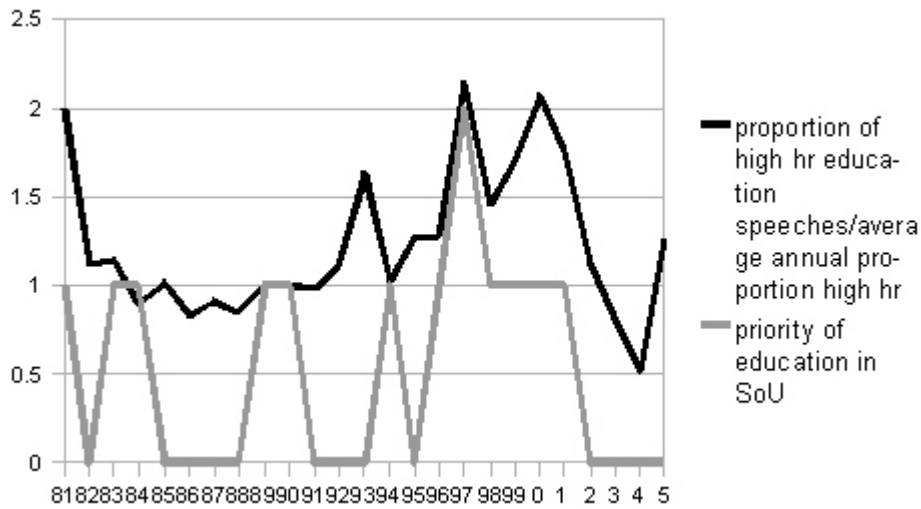


Figure 3.10

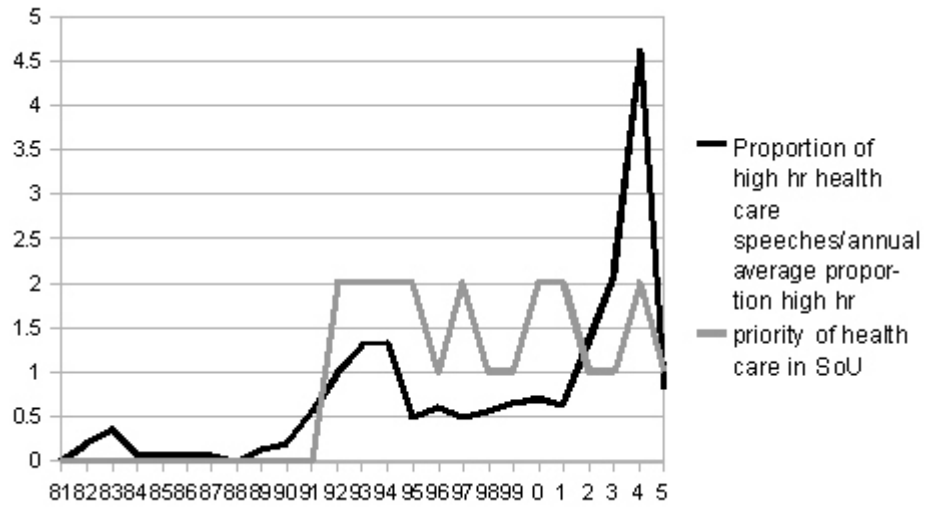


Figure 3.11

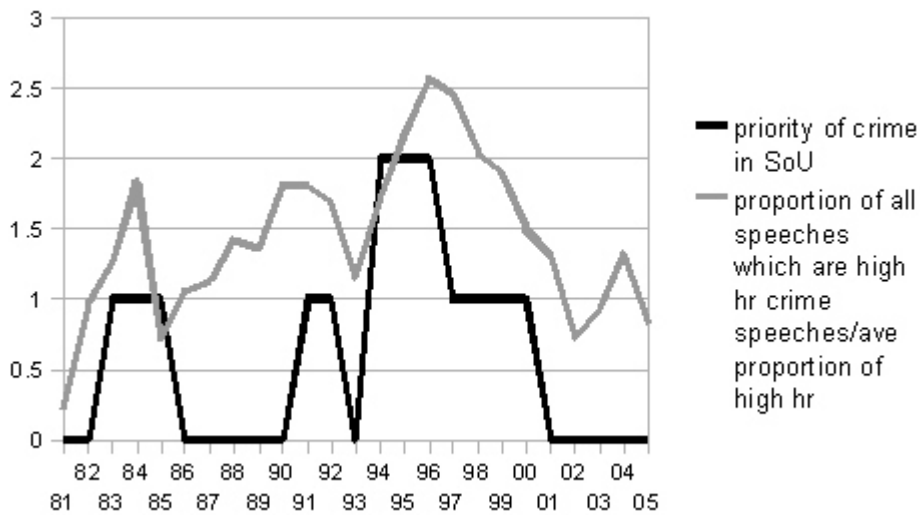


Figure 3.12

## Conclusion

In this chapter I described the method by which I developed a quantitative variable to describe variation in the presidential use of heroic framing. This variable, which I call “heroic rhetoric,” is based on the president’s use of words from a keyword dictionary I developed out of a set of meaningful reference texts. After outlining the process of developing my dictionary, I described the method by which I collected and selected presidential texts to include in my corpus.

Once I had compiled the heroic rhetoric variable, I examined the way that it varied. I found that nearly a third of presidential speeches had significant heroic rhetoric while the remainder had either some or no heroic rhetoric. In looking at the use of heroic rhetoric over the 1981-2005 period, I found a complicated, nonlinear trend, marked by greater use of heroic rhetoric in the middle years of the Reagan presidency, a decline in the GHW Bush and Clinton years, and then a dramatically heightened use of heroic rhetoric during George W. Bush's presidency. Presidents consistently used more heroic rhetoric in foreign policy speeches than they did in speeches which did not concern foreign policy. Presidents also tended to use greater amounts of heroic rhetoric after their first year in office, a result which may be attributable to the greater emphasis first-year presidents place on domestic policy.

Finally, I used this opportunity to test the hypothesis that heroic framing could have a “charisma effect” – that is, that heroic framing might regularly be used to increase the president’s public approval rating. I used annual State of the Union addresses to evaluate how variations in the president’s use of heroic rhetoric in these addresses related to public approval ratings. While I saw that higher than average approval ratings in the period before a State of the Union address were associated with the presidential decision to use greater than average amounts of heroic rhetoric in that address, I did not find that an increase in the use of heroic rhetoric in State of the Union addresses predicted an increase in post-address presidential approval polls. In fact, the trend appeared generally to move in the opposite direction. This finding suggests that heroic framing may not produce a reliable boost in presidential popularity and is therefore unlikely to be used as a method of increasing public perceptions of presidential charisma.

However, I did find preliminary support for the notion that presidents use heroic framing in connection with their policy priorities. First, I found that presidents use greater than average heroic rhetoric in public addresses. Addresses are ad hoc events scheduled at the president’s initiative and are thus likely to concern presidential priority areas. The association of heroic rhetoric with this form of presidential speech suggests that presidents use this rhetoric when they feel strongly about an issue. I also looked at the relationship between presidents’ assertion of the importance of key domestic policy areas in their annual addresses and their annual use of heroic rhetoric in connection with those areas. I found that there was a meaningful association between the presidents’ prioritization of domestic policy domains at the beginning of each year and their use of heroic rhetoric in connection with those areas through the rest of the year. Together, these findings suggest that presidents are more likely to use heroic rhetoric in connection with their policy priorities than in connection with their personal popularity.

Given this relationship between heroic rhetoric and presidential policy priorities, I will start to look at how, if at all, the president’s use of heroic rhetoric might be effective as a mode of persuasion. Following McCombs et al (2004), I will assume that if presidents wish to frame an

issue by emphasizing selected attributes of that issue, they must first make it salient. For the first stage of my analysis, therefore, I will evaluate my hypothesis that the president's use of heroic framing will increase the degree of media attention to the framed subject. If I can establish that the president's use of heroic rhetoric effectively raises the degree of attention to the subject of presidential speech, I will next approach the question of how the president's use of heroic rhetoric works to alter the way in which subjects of presidential speech are framed– that is, whether it successfully changes the public discourse around those subjects.

### *A note on “terror”*

It is worthwhile to consider the meaning of the word “terror” in the context of heroic rhetoric. The use of the word “terror” is strongly associated with the act of terrorism, which is a variety of illegitimate warfare, as well as being associated with the George W. Bush-era term “War on Terror.” In addition, it is in itself a word which describes the human state of extraordinary fright which accompanies the perception of being under serious and immediate personal threat – a word with an extremely strong negative valence which has nonetheless come to be used quite routinely in political speech.

In other words, “terror” represents a piece of rhetoric with the potential to be quite massively effective. It also fits neatly into the “enemy” category of my heroic rhetoric dictionary as it characterizes the type of violence that the hero’s antagonist would be expected to deploy. Due to its strong emotional valence, the use of the word “terror” in connection with foreign policy functionally casts everything with which it is associated into heroic terms, including the black-and-white moral framework implied by that imagery. It is impossible to be associated with the use of “terror” without being framed as a morally bad person. Whenever the word “terror” is used, it necessarily invokes the heroic narrative: the existence of “terror” means that there is a villain who is intentionally deploying this terror in order to terrify innocent people. The existence of innocent people who are helpless victims of terror, then, creates the necessity that someone come and save them from the evil terror-wielder. The hero must save the innocent people through challenging and vanquishing the villain.

Unfortunately, while this word is extremely attractive from the perspective of measuring the effects of heroic rhetoric, it is also very specifically linked to the rhetorical strategies of George W. Bush’s administration and thus has the potential to skew my effects for the overall 1980 to 2005 period. In examining presidential use of the word “terror”, I found that from 1980-2000, presidents used the word “terror” around 250 times a year, on average. (The largest departure from this average was during 1996, the year of the Oklahoma City bombing, when Clinton used the word 1115 times.) Between 2001-2005, meanwhile, Bush used the word terror more than 2800 times a year on average – more than ten times the average use of the word during the rest of my period of interest. This is unquestionably an interesting phenomenon in and of itself, and I examine it more closely later in Chapter 8. However, George W. Bush is already an outlier in his use of heroic rhetoric and I felt that including “terror” would have exaggerated this difference even more – possibly to the extent that it would become difficult to compare him with other presidents. Because I want to understand the effects of heroic rhetoric over a larger period of time, I have decided to exclude it for this particular project and, at this point, to simply acknowledge its strong significance as a rhetorical device.

## Chapter 4: Subjects of Heroic Rhetoric

In the previous chapter, I produced one iteration of my heroic rhetoric variable – a measurement of the presidents' total use of heroic rhetoric over the 1981-2005 period. However, while a general measurement of all presidential heroic rhetoric can tell us something about each president's use of heroic imagery in general, it doesn't tell us anything about their use of heroic rhetoric in connection with particular issues. Because it doesn't specify anything about the specific issues each president frames, I can't use a general variable to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of presidential heroic framing in specific policy domains. Rather, if presidents use heroic rhetoric in order to persuade audiences to support specific policies, I need more information about the presidents' use of heroic rhetoric in the context of specific foreign policy issues. Before doing even this, however, I need to first identify specific foreign policy issues which presidents may hold as priorities. Once I identify these specific policy issues, I can then select a category of relevant presidential speech in order to test the effects of heroic rhetoric in specific policy domains.

In this chapter, I describe how I defined an appropriate universe of foreign policy “issues” and developed a method for identifying presidential priorities. After producing a list of relevant speech subjects through this method, I then provide statistics to describe presidential rhetorical engagement with each subject. For the most part, I found that presidential attention – and presidential heroic framing – varied substantially from subject to subject and over time. Despite this, I demonstrate how certain patterns nonetheless hold true for the 1981-2005 period as a whole.

### Identifying Presidential Priorities By Speech Subject

My hypotheses in this project concern the specific causes of the president's decision to use of heroic framing and the specific effects of presidential heroic framing on public and official audiences. These causes and effects all concern how the president's speech operates as public rhetoric. As the agent which “publicizes” the president's public rhetoric, the news media plays a critical intervening role. Because of this, scholars who are interested in the effects of presidential public rhetoric frequently look at the effects of presidential speech in terms of the president's media agenda-setting power – that is, his ability to increase news coverage of particular subjects. Much of the work which has been done on defining presidential speech subjects for a study of their effects has therefore been done in the course of studying presidential media agenda-setting. However, although my problem of figuring out how to define a presidential speech subject is common to all studies of agenda-setting, it is actually surprising how little guidance the agenda-setting literature offers on how to go about defining specific subjects. To some extent, this may be a problem which is more serious for studies like my own which are (relative to the literature) quite long-term. For the most part, when scholars look at shorter periods of time they have a much more limited number of significant issues available for study, so there may be less of a need to choose.



Nonetheless, when one does have a long period of time to examine, one must choose from among a larger group of issues which each exhibit varying degrees of political relevance. There is accordingly less of an opportunity to take the inductive “common sense” path to a set of subjects which might seem more reasonable for a shorter time-period. Moreover, while other studies of agenda setting tend to look at a somewhat eclectic set of issue areas, my specific focus on foreign policy allows me to develop a more standardized method of selecting relevant speech subjects for tests of presidential agenda-setting power. Standardizing my choice of foreign policy subjects has the advantage of removing the hindsight bias that would likely otherwise affect my choice of subjects to follow. Moreover, it allows me to expand or reduce the pool of subjects in a regular way, meaningfully provide judgments about the “importance” of subjects in specific moments and over time and also to identify good comparative cases for closer examinations of the power of presidential speech effects.

While there has not been a tremendous amount of work done on the topic of presidential speech subject definition, there has been some. Scholars have tended to go in several different directions with the task of subject selection. As in the first work on agenda-setting (McCombs and Shaw 1972), some have frequently simply divided presidential speech subjects into “foreign policy” and “domestic policy.” Sometimes they will create more comprehensive lists of categories which correlate with their own observations of what political subjects presidents and media outlets both tend to cover; Iyengar and Kinder (1989), for example, identified their agenda-setting subjects of interest as defense, inflation, arms control, civil rights, and unemployment. I particularly wanted to explore the effects of presidential foreign policy speech, so I didn’t want to use a broad-spectrum set of categories like Iyengar and Kinder’s. Although other scholars have found the simple foreign policy/domestic policy dichotomy acceptable, I feel that this type of categorization lacks sufficient detail to make a truly convincing argument about agenda-setting.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, I knew that I would also want to understand foreign media responses to US presidential speech. Examining foreign media responses, as a whole, to US presidential foreign policy speech, as a whole, would not offer much subtlety or detail.

Therefore, rather than using an overall category of “foreign policy,” I felt it made more sense to think about countries themselves as subjects of presidential speech. While this seems like a fairly obvious way of identifying speech subjects – labels for countries are easily identified, mentioned in routine ways without much rhetorical drift, and are certainly meaningful units of analysis – as far as I was able to tell it seems to be a fairly unusual approach to agenda-setting. Scholars have studied presidential speech in terms of their speech about regions, particularly the Middle East, but outside of work done in the tradition of image theory I found no comparable work isolating presidential speech about individual countries. This is somewhat unexpected. In seeking to examine the effect of presidential speech on foreign policy-relevant outcomes, I would have imagined that using individual countries as subject categories would be a more common practice. I can only imagine that this logic is obscured due to the way that many of our most complicated foreign policies involve regions rather than individual states.

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<sup>43</sup> For example, in the earliest McCombs and Shaw work (1972), it is difficult to know to whether their observations on the president’s agenda-setting power on “foreign policy” issues essentially boiled down to observations on the president’s agenda-setting power on Vietnam.

Yet, when one actually boils down to the level of foreign policy legislation, foreign policies are enacted towards individual states. Most foreign policies concern bureaucratic events, routinized and organized in order to allow interstate transactions to occur according to existing rules. The bulk of foreign policy concerns practical matters – the management of regular trade relations, tourism and travel, the maintenance of embassies and communication about international transportation – and these policies all refer to individual countries.

Furthermore, identifying individual states as subjects makes particular sense in the context of my overarching theory. Within the domain of foreign policy speech, we can see individual countries as the *dramatis personae* presented within in the president's heroic framing. In the course of the president's speech, these countries (and, most typically, their leaders) are portrayed as the villains and victims relative to the home country's heroes. Since individual foreign policies target specific countries and since countries are so frequently turned into individuals in speech about foreign policy (Lakoff 1991, Wendt 2004), heroic narratives are most often played out with reference to individual countries. Certain countries – and specifically the leadership of certain countries – are routinely portrayed as villains. Other countries – and typically the mass populace of other countries – are routinely portrayed as victims. As described in Chapter Two, image theorists also identify individual countries as repositories for international images (of the foreign country as enemy, or degenerate, or imperialist, and so on.) While regions as a whole may be problematic, they are less likely to be able to achieve identification with individual narrative characters.

Naturally, the large number of countries/categories that is initially implicated by this decision creates one potential problem. I did not want to test the effects of heroic rhetoric (or lack thereof) in the case of all 192 sovereign states. However, I did want to choose a broad array of states which have been the subject of some substantial degree of presidential attention. I therefore decided to discover which countries were most often the subject of presidential discussion over the course of 1981-2005 and to investigate the effects of heroic rhetoric in the case of these particular countries. In other words, once I decided to look at countries rather than regions or issue areas, I needed to determine which of those countries constituted US presidential priorities. One established method I might use in this case was to identify presidential priorities through mentions of subjects within presidential State of the Union addresses (Cohen 1995). However, this method has several flaws when an analyst is looking exclusively at presidential foreign policy agendas. First, unlike in the case of domestic policy, the significance of individual foreign policy issues depends on the behavior of foreign policy targets. This can happen at any time over the course of the year. Presidential statements at the beginning of the year will not account for the future behavior of other states which may make them sudden US policy priorities. Second, presidents tend not to mention foreign policy in the major Statement of Administration Goals address which substitutes for a State of the Union address during their first year in office. Third, there are certain anomalies in the countries mentioned during State of the Union addresses which make them less than ideal reflections of the reality of US foreign policy. For example, Israel is not mentioned once over the course of twenty-five years of State of the Union addresses, despite the fact that it is a critical part of the American foreign policy universe. Similarly, presidents sometimes use State of the Union addresses as an opportunity to thank states which were helpful to the US or which hosted the president in the year just past, but which do not truly represent a

major part of the foreign policy agenda for the year to come. Thus, while the analysis of State of the Union addresses may provide sufficient data for studies of domestic policy, I felt that a using different method was more appropriate for identifying foreign policy priorities.

### Identifying Trends in Presidential Foreign Policy Attention

The method I decided to employ utilized the annual frequencies of speeches in which presidents mentioned each individual country. To identify which countries were most frequently the subject of foreign policy speech, I identified every mention of each country names in my collection of presidential speeches made between 1981 and 2005. I identified a speech as including a country mention either when presidents used a country's proper name (e.g., "Switzerland") or when they mentioned the country in adjectival form (e.g., "Swiss.")

While the search method I used allows me to search an enormous volume of text very quickly, it also has certain validity problems that led me to discard four countries from evaluation. First, because of the number of names that can be used to describe the UK (the UK, United Kingdom, Great Britain, England, British Isles), the overlap between references to "England" and references to "New England," and the frequent historical references to 18th century England and the founding of the United States, I decided to exclude the UK from this particular study since the measures of current foreign policy reference would be too confounded by these search problems. Second, my keyword search for terms related to India was confounded by the frequency with which American Indian tribes are mentioned. Next, I decided to exclude references to Ireland as a high proportion of Ireland references do not refer to contemporary foreign policy but rather to commemoration of St. Patrick's Day. The use of the term "Irish" is also often in association with sports teams and, in the case of Ronald Reagan, as a surprisingly frequent reference to personal ancestry. As a result of these uses, Ireland is over-represented in a study of the frequency of country mentions relative to the frequency with which the contemporary country is itself actually intended. Finally, I decided to exclude Jordan, because this name is too often used in its signification as a popular American last name.

These exclusions are to some degree problematic as these three countries are all important members of the US foreign policy agenda. This exclusion may be particularly problematic in the case of the UK, for the UK is perhaps the most significant of America's foreign policy partners. However, although it would be better to have been able to include the UK within this study, the ultimate purpose of the study should not be strongly affected by exclusion of a country that is unlikely to be characterized either as a danger to the US or, typically, as a sympathetic country in need of rescue. For similar reasons, I believe it is acceptable to exclude both Ireland and India. Jordan has been a critical actor in US Middle East policy, but it has neither been perceived to be a direct threat nor have US presidents argued that Jordan was a particular victim of threat. Once again, it would have been better to have been able to include it, but I believe it to be a tolerable omission. With regard to the remaining countries under study, I calculated the number of times each country was measured each year and then listed all countries according to the frequency with which they were mentioned each year, from most frequently mentioned to least frequently mentioned.

I then sought to validate this method of determining presidential foreign policy priority. I felt that if the frequency with which the president mentions a country reflects something meaningful about that country's significance to US foreign policy, I should see certain regularities in the year-to-year presidential mentions of that country. First, we should expect to see substantial correlations in the most-frequently-mentioned-country lists among the years within a single presidential term. While I will look more specifically at the question of individual presidential priorities in a later section of this chapter, we should nonetheless start seeing the outlines of a personal agenda in the fact that when presidents have a particular political interest in a country, they should mention it with greater relative frequency during all the years they are in office. Second, given that national foreign policies (like wars) may span years that extend beyond individual presidential terms, we should expect to see substantial correlations among consecutive years extending beyond the limits of individual presidential terms. To check whether my method supported these two hypotheses, I checked the correlations between the frequency with which each country was mentioned per year between every pair of years in my time period. A chart showing the correlations between the frequencies with which each country was mentioned is attached as Appendix C.

The correlations demonstrate support for my first hypothesis: individual presidents tend to mention the same set of countries during their tenure, reflecting a consistent personal presidential agenda. For the most part, the frequency with which each country is mentioned remains relatively constant within presidential tenures, both within terms for single-term presidents (GHW. Bush and GW Bush, for whom 2001-2005 is being treated as a single term) and both within and between terms for the two-term presidents (Reagan and Clinton.) The correlations among years in the first Reagan term ranged from 0.74 to 0.87, while his foreign policy speech focus appeared even more consistent in his second term, with correlations among years ranging from 0.90 to 0.95. This high consistency was at least partially due to the long-running nature of the inquiry into the Iran-Contra scandal, but given that the highest correlation is actually between country mentions in 1985, which preceded the scandal, and 1988, most of this correlation must be considered to stem from Reagan's own consistency in policy targets. Taking each term as a whole and averaging out the mentions of each country across all years within a term, Reagan's two presidential terms correlated at 0.88 with respect to his average number of mentions of each country per year. Meanwhile, taking the median of country mentions per year across a term, Reagan's two presidential terms correlated at 0.91.

In four years in office, G.H.W. Bush presided both over the enormous shift in foreign relations that was the end of the Cold War and the largest American international intervention since the Vietnam War; the path of these two important events can be easily observed in the patterns of countries he mentioned across the four years of his tenure in office. Between the opposite ends of his presidency, 1989 and 1992, the frequency with which Bush mentioned each country correlates at only 0.56. Meanwhile, Bush's pattern of country-mentions during the years of the Gulf War (1990-1991) correlated at 0.87.

Clinton's first term presented a pattern of country mentions that correlated within a range from 0.76 to 0.89, similar to Reagan's first term. His frequency of country mentions remained similarly stable, with correlations ranging between 0.75 and 0.84 throughout the first three years of his second term, but the correlation between the frequency of Clinton's country mentions in

1997 and 2000 was only 0.66. The difference between the discussion of countries between those two years reveals a variety of changes in foreign policy priorities: in the beginning of this period, the US was focused on Iraqi intransigence in the weapon inspection process, while by the end the US was heavily involved in the NATO-led intervention in Kosovo. The difference was magnified by some other changes to Clinton's priorities at the end of his tenure. In 2000 Clinton spoke much more frequently about – and visited – a series of otherwise less-mentioned countries, including Colombia, a trans-African trip to Tanzania, Egypt and Nigeria, and Vietnam, in the first visit of a sitting US president since the Vietnam War. Overall, taking each term as a whole and averaging out the mentions of each country across all of the years within a term, Clinton's two presidential terms correlated at 0.76 with respect to the frequency with which he mentioned each country per year. (Taking the median of country mentions per year across a term, Clinton's two terms correlated at a slightly lower 0.74.)

No president is marked by as much inconsistency in the frequency of mentioned countries as GW Bush. His frequency of country mentions during 2001 bears only a minor resemblance to those at the end of the examined period in 2005; correlations of the frequency with which Bush mentioned specific countries between 2001 and 2003, 2001 and 2004, and 2001 and 2005 range from 0.29 to 0.37. 2002 appears to represent a kind of bridging year between the frequency of countries mentioned in 2001 and those mentioned in the second half of this period, as Bush's advocacy for the Iraq war had begun but had not fully taken on the omnipresent quality it was later to achieve in Bush's foreign policy speeches. The frequency of country mentions in 2002 correlates well with those in 2001, 2003, 2004 and 2005, ranging from 0.75 to 0.82. Finally, the years 2003-2005, representing a period of two simultaneous wars, exhibited nearly identical frequencies of country-mention. Correlations among these years on this dimension ranged from 0.96 to 0.98.

Overall, when thinking about the frequency with which presidents mentioned particular countries in their speeches, there were strong correlations in those trends both within individual terms and across the total tenure of two-term presidents. There were certain instances in which there were, relatively speaking, weak relationships within a presidential tenure, particularly in the case of GW Bush after the 9/11 attacks, but also to a lesser extent between the first and last years of the GHW Bush presidency and the first and last years of the second Clinton term. However, those instances seem overshadowed by the general congruence among the presidential speeches of individual presidents.

This hypothesis is also supported by the evidence that outside of presidential terms, the correlation between frequency of country mentions during individual, non-consecutive years drops considerably. Correlations between individual years in the 1980s and 1990s (the Clinton and Reagan years), for example, range from 0.29 to 0.48. Nor does ideological similarity make a substantial dent in this trend: matching the years from the tenure of Reagan and GW Bush, for example, does not produce higher correlations.

However, supporting my second hypothesis, I found that there were indeed strong correlations between consecutive years. On average presidential country mentions between consecutive years correlated at 0.82. (The median correlation between consecutive years was also 0.82.) The correlation between the frequency of country mentions during individual consecutive years ranged a low of 0.65, between the Clinton-GW Bush transition years of 2000-2001, to a



high of 0.96, which was true of 1987-1988 under Reagan and both 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 under GW Bush.<sup>44</sup> This result tells us that – in line with what we would expect about periods of foreign policy activity targeted at particular countries, or presidential observations on relevant ongoing multi-year conflicts – presidents are likely to maintain their preoccupations with particular countries from year to year

. Further, these observations on correlations between consecutive years offers some preliminary insight into what happens to the national foreign policy agenda during presidential transitions. The logical implication of the statements that 1) consecutive years should demonstrate more similarity than non-consecutive years; and 2) years within presidential tenure should demonstrate more similarity than years which don't share a presidential tenure; is that there should be less similarity in presidential mentions of countries between consecutive years which bracket a presidential transition than the average pair of consecutive years. Given a very small sample of three presidential transitions (Reagan to GHW Bush, GHW Bush to Clinton, Clinton to GW Bush), there is some support this hypothesis. The Reagan to Bush transition years correlated at .72 while the Clinton to Bush transition years, as mentioned, correlated at .65. However, the Bush-Clinton transition correlated at a rate higher than the average – .84 – suggesting that the national foreign policy preoccupations of the 1992-1993 period may have outweighed the differences in the individual policy agendas of those two presidents. Indeed, thinking empirically about those years, the emphases on NAFTA, Iraq and the former Yugoslavia which characterized the end of GHW Bush's period in office remained constant sources of foreign policy attention throughout Clinton's two terms.

### Identifying Presidential Priorities out of Speech Trends

Having validated that my method of identifying presidential priorities bears some regular relationship to specific presidential interests and time periods., I next turned to identifying which countries were most routinely discussed within the 1981-2005 time period. For each year in this time period, I listed all countries in order from the most frequently mentioned to the least frequently mentioned.. I then selected the twenty-five most frequently mentioned countries for each year to be compiled into a measure of countries which are part of the active and latent US foreign policy universe. (These itemized lists of most frequently mentioned countries, in order of the frequency of their mention, are attached as Appendix D.) From this set of lists, I then counted the number of years that each country was represented in the most-frequently-mentioned list to determine which countries were most frequently mentioned overall.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> While not consecutive, the G.W. Bush years of 2003 and 2005 had the most similar frequencies of country name mention out of the entire group, with a correlation of 0.98. It is likely that the different speaking requirements of the election year campaign produced the difference in correlation seen in years contiguous with 2004.

<sup>45</sup> I could envision several other ways one might use this data to identify members of the foreign policy universe – for instance, by determine a minimum number of times that a country



My decision to, in effect, weight each country's frequency of mention in one year by the number of years that it was frequently mentioned reflected my overall project goals. I sought to identify a set of serious foreign policy targets which were likely, at least at some point, to be the subject of substantial presidential heroic framing. In order for countries to be viable subjects for heroic framing, they must be sufficiently familiar to the public that presidents might be likely to develop a narrative and sense of national mission around them. Countries which can serve as effective subjects for heroic rhetoric should be countries with which citizens have longer-term familiarity since it is the historical relationship that countries have with one another over time which provides the basis for paying attention to relevant new developments. It would be difficult for a president to try to characterize a country's presence on the foreign policy agenda as being critical to national identity or security if there has not been some sort of work to prepare the nation to accept this rationale.<sup>46</sup>

Moreover, what we see when we look at the annual lists of most frequently mentioned countries (and as we can infer from the correlations study above), presidents tend to speak about the same set of countries over the course of their tenure. The logic driving this pattern of speech is that presidents both have and wish to communicate an interest in a regular set of country actors. In the process of communicating about these countries, they convey their status – their image – as friends, foes or victims.

At the same time, patterns in the frequency of country mentions are only somewhat consistent from year to year. There is variation over time, depending on the individual political preferences of presidents and events occurring both within and outside of the country. Different countries will be of greater and lesser interest over time. We should thus expect that there will be both a certain degree of continuity and a certain degree of variation in the countries that are mentioned most frequently. My goal is thus to capture the range of countries of both active and latent national interest: those countries that presidents focus on most each year, as well as those countries that are mentioned frequently enough to remain within the universe of foreign policy interest, if not foreign policy focus.

As the lists in Appendix D demonstrate, several countries demonstrated great staying power on the US foreign policy agenda, showing up as a frequently mentioned country in every or nearly every year examined. The Soviet Union or Russia, Germany, Israel, Japan and China were among the twenty-five most-mentioned countries every year. Iran was among the most frequently mentioned group in all but one year and Cuba and Korea were in the most frequently

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must be mentioned in order to be considered a “most discussed” country, or by simply counting the number of times a country had been mentioned over the entire twenty-five year period. However, I felt that these methods would have introduced problems regarding how the list was to be weighted by election year (or by loquacity of individual president) as well as insufficiently ensuring that countries were mentioned over time. This method has the advantage of making it easy to compare agendas from year to year.

<sup>46</sup> Kuypers (2006) calls this the “preknowledge” that must be in place before a topic can be publicly framed; Entman (projections book) describes this information as what will determine the “fit” of the frame.

mentioned group during all but two years. Mexico was the next most consistently mentioned, followed by Canada. Given their consistent presence in presidential speeches, we might consider these countries to be the most fundamental to the American foreign policy agenda – the most unvarying reference points for American presidents in seeking to understand and explain the world for the purposes of US foreign policymaking.

This universe is, moreover, fairly consistent from the Cold War period through the post-Cold War, and even into the post-9/11 period. They represent a combination of countries persistently perceived to be a threat (the Soviet Union, Cuba, Iran and North Korea), an ally constantly perceived to be under severe threat (Israel) and our top five trading partners (Germany, Japan, China, Canada, and Mexico.)<sup>47</sup> While any president could choose to identify these countries as personal priorities on his foreign policy agenda, the US has developed such stable foreign policy relationships with these countries that they are likely to be placed there for him by other institutional actors, regardless of whether or not the president has a particular policy interest in these countries. The president is likely to be compelled to speak frequently about these countries whether or not he wishes to personally designate them as priorities. However, he might choose to use heroic framing as a way of bringing a special degree of attention to them, or to attempt to intensify the national sentiment toward them in order to create a sense of urgency around presidential policies relevant to these countries.

The next-most frequently mentioned group of countries included France, Italy, Poland, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Vietnam. These countries are all present in the most frequently mentioned category in many but not all of the last twenty-five years. These are countries with which the US has meaningful historical bonds – either important alliances or important adversarial relationships – and sometimes important contemporary political engagements. This group represents two long-term but sometimes temperamental allies (France and Italy), two countries subject to US military engagement several times in the last twenty-five years (Iraq and Afghanistan), a country that was the location of a long and tragic US war (Vietnam) and one country that was previously perceived to be a victim of the Soviet Union and which is now important as an uncritical ally in the post-9/11 wars (Poland). While Egypt was slightly less frequently mentioned (in the most-frequently-mentioned group for thirteen out of twenty-five years) it fits a similar pattern of intermittent focus. Egypt, along with Jordan (which was excluded from this study for reasons described above), has represented an important ally within the Middle East and often helped the US to achieve its goal of increasing Israeli security. Since Israeli security is a consistent US foreign policy concern, Egypt becomes important to US foreign policy whenever it is needed as an intermediary. The intermittent focus on these countries suggests that while they are relatively known quantities in American foreign policy, they may be even more promising subjects for heroic framing. Unlike those countries which are very regular subjects of attention, countries which are most often mentioned in most, but not all, years may have reputations malleable enough to be open to a certain degree of redefinition; presidential heroic framing may offer a convincing way to think about a state that is less well-known.

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<sup>47</sup> “Top five trading partners” – excluding the UK, for reasons provided above. I gathered this information about trading partner rankings from [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

The next most frequently mentioned group consists of countries which are foreign policy priorities for individual presidents or for a set of two consecutively-serving presidents. The focus on these countries may stem either from independent presidential interest or from a dramatic political shift within the country of interest. Regardless of the reason behind its increased significance, however, its period as a subject of attention is limited: there are insufficient institutional or historical reasons for the country to continue to remain on the public US foreign policy agenda once the situation or the presidency has changed. Nonetheless, they sustain the interest of a president (or sometimes two presidents) for a series of years, and during this time the president works to frame his preferred policy with regard to these countries.<sup>48</sup> The group of countries which are among the most frequently mentioned over the course of multiple years includes Angola, Bosnia, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Grenada, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Indonesia, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, Sudan, the Philippines, Ukraine, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.<sup>49</sup>

I view this last group of countries as being likely to be a particularly fruitful set of rhetorical targets for the president. These countries will be mostly unfamiliar to the public before their introduction by the president, which means that the president will have more freedom to define the relationship to that country in exactly the way he would like. The very fact that these countries are relatively less known to the American public is likely to make the president's persuasive rhetoric more effective. Studies of propaganda have demonstrated that propaganda is most effective where people either do not already have much information about a subject or have no established opinion about it (Katz 1987). In the case of most of these countries, most US citizens would have little by way of established knowledge or opinion – and therefore little existing frame or image of what these countries are “really” like, whether they are “really” good or bad places, or run by good or bad leaders. This lack of knowledge would make most people (and reporters, perhaps) more open to presidential framing. On the other hand, the lack of established information about these countries may result in a public lack of interest in these countries regardless of presidential framing, and while the president may attempt to frame a country of interest in heroic terms he may be less successful in cases where countries are ultimately less salient to the relevant audience.

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<sup>48</sup> While Syria, Brazil, Argentina, Spain, and Venezuela were also among the most frequently mentioned group a handful of times in this twenty-five year period, the spacing of these mentions was intermittent. In other words, while they were periodically the subject of presidential focus, they were not countries which presidents were choosing to prioritize on their foreign policy agendas. The fact that these countries were not the subject of consecutive years of frequent mention helps to further demonstrate the significance of presidential prioritization in determining the subject of presidential speeches: two of these countries (Syria and Venezuela) could easily have been cast as persistent threats due, in one case, to an association with attacks on Israel and a willingness to sponsor international terrorism (Syria) and in the other to recent antagonism towards the US and increasing political leftism (Venezuela).

<sup>49</sup> In looking at why Uruguay was mentioned as often as it was, I discovered that most mentions of Uruguay concerned the Uruguay Round of World Trade Organization negotiations.

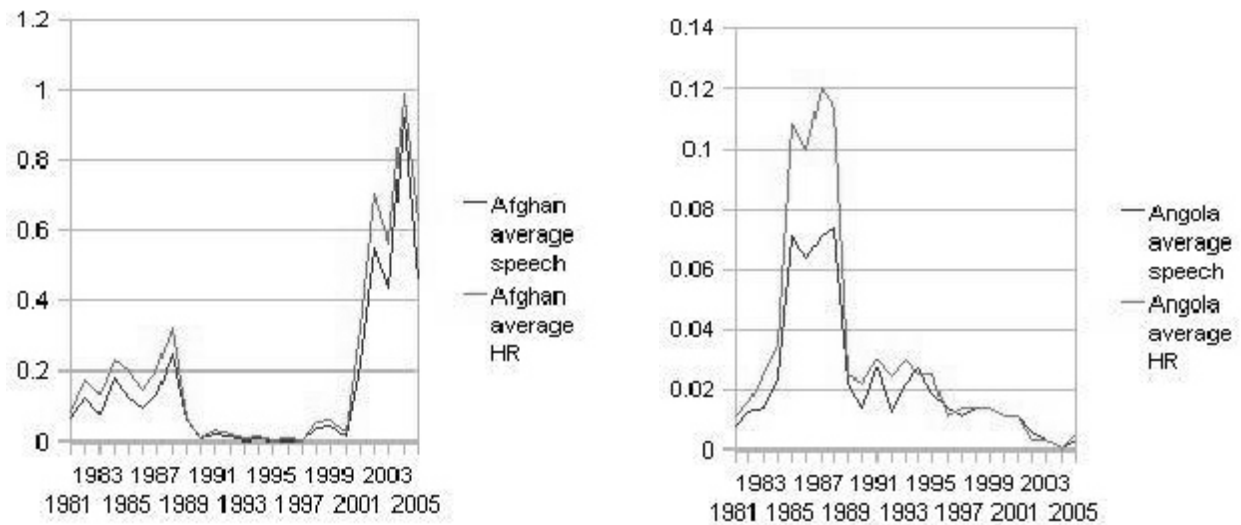
## Presidential Speech and the Heroic Framing of Foreign Policy Priorities

In order to later investigate the agenda-setting and framing power of presidential heroic framing on foreign policy issues, I decided to track the presidential speech in the case of twenty-five countries: the top ten most frequently mentioned countries for the 1981-2005 period, plus a selection of fifteen additional countries selected from the next-most frequently mentioned groups. This set of foreign policy targets should allow me to create a good picture of the presidential use of heroic rhetoric in the case of foreign policy.

What follows is a presentation of trends in the average frequency of speeches given by presidents regarding each country of interest, trends in the average use of heroic rhetoric, and a brief paragraph summarizing the policy concerns which drove periods of high presidential prioritization of each country.

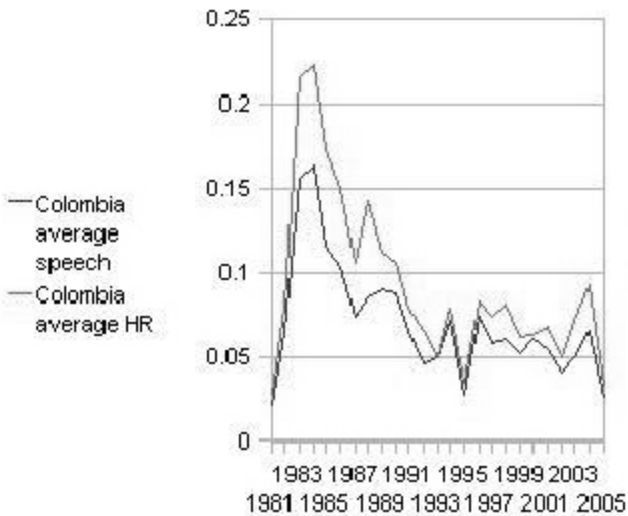
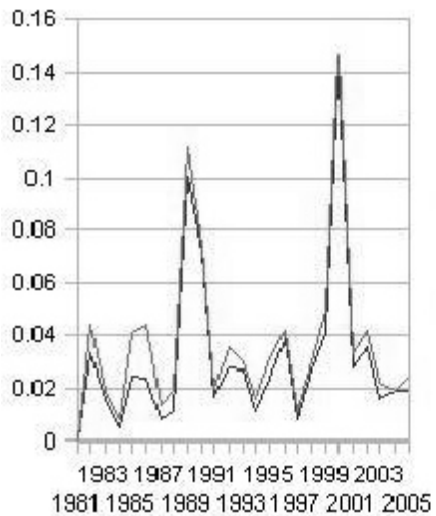
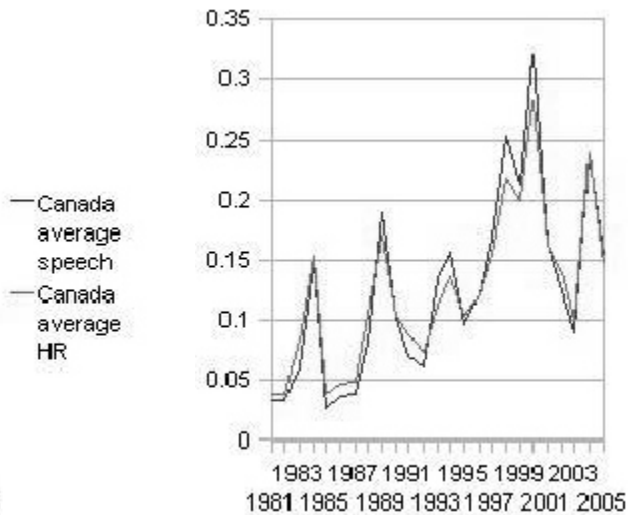
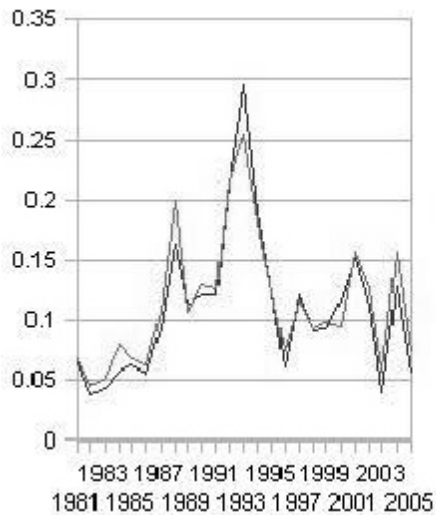
*Afghanistan* was the subject of two main waves of attention from US presidents. During the 1980s, Reagan argued for the need to stem the threat stemming from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (leading to the American funding of anti-Communist insurgents) and then in 2001, George W. Bush ordered the invasion of Afghanistan in response to the Afghan-based Taliban's September 11, 2001 attack on New York and Washington, D.C.

*Angola* spent nearly the entire 1980-2005 period engaged in civil war. In terms of its relations with the US, however, Angola was far less significant on its own than it was as a proving ground for US and Soviet proxy armies during the Cold War. Angola was thus of greatest interest to the US during the 1980s, when Reagan strongly advocated supporting UNITA insurgents.



*Canada* is a vital US foreign policy partner, particularly in trade. During the 1981-2005 period those trade relations became even closer as a result of the development and signing of two major pieces of trade legislation: the 1988 Free Trade Agreement, passed under Reagan, and the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), passed under Clinton.

Presidential attention to *China* was characterized by a continuing trend of interest and relationship-building through the 1980s, brought to a sudden halt by the Tiennamen Square massacre in June 1989. Through the 1990s, both GHW Bush and Clinton worked to improve US opinion towards China in order to normalize trade relations with this important US partner. Despite periodic political setbacks (such as the accidental US bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999), Clinton achieved this goal in 2000. Relations between the countries began to sour again under GW Bush.



*Colombia* was of some interest to Reagan and GHW Bush, but became the subject of much more frequent speech after the 1998 development of Plan Colombia, a multi-year plan intended to allow the US to help Colombia with drug interdiction. Since 1998, Colombia has been the recipient of billions of dollars worth of military and non-military aid. Although GW

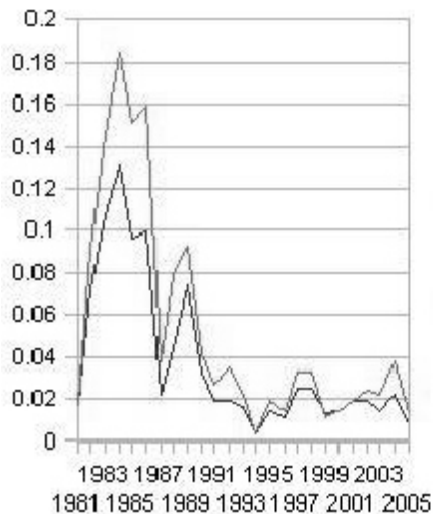


Bush did not share many foreign policy priorities with Clinton, he adopted Clinton's prioritization of Colombia and mentioned it frequently during all but one of the first five years of his presidency.<sup>50</sup>

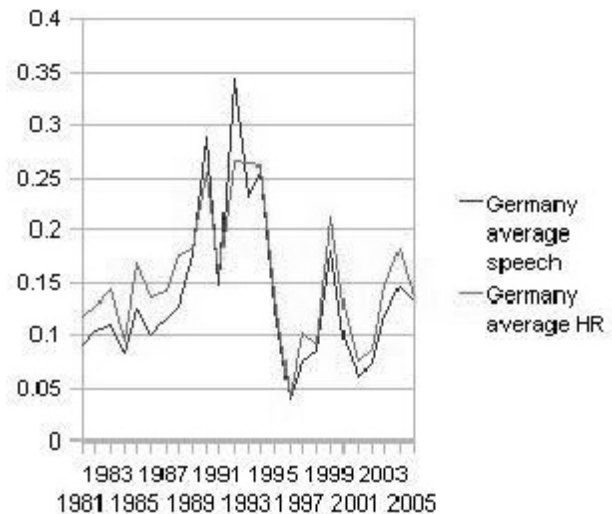
As a dangerously closely-located ally of the Soviet Union, *Cuba* was of greatest presidential interest during the Cold War. However, after the fall of the Soviet Union Cuba retained its significance as a source of political refugees and as a major political focus for the Miami-based Cuban emigre community.

*El Salvador*, facing an insurgency led by the Cuba- and Nicaragua-linked FMLN, was engulfed in civil war throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. The US supported the government with substantial financial aid and military “advisors.” The role of US military personnel became a subject of public interest due to the extreme and graphic nature of human rights abuses perpetrated by the US-supported government.

Over the course of the period from 1981-2005, *Germany* evolved considerably – from being a divided country and flashpoint in the Cold War to being one of the largest national economies in the world. While the country was of interest to the US as a victim of Soviet threats during the 1980s, it was of even greater interest during the exciting political moment of its reunification. References to Germany were sometimes intended to invoke historical rather than contemporary visions of the state, particularly following the US invasion of Iraq when GW Bush made frequent allusions to post-war Germany in describing his intentions for Iraq.



— El Salvador average speech  
— El Salvador average HR



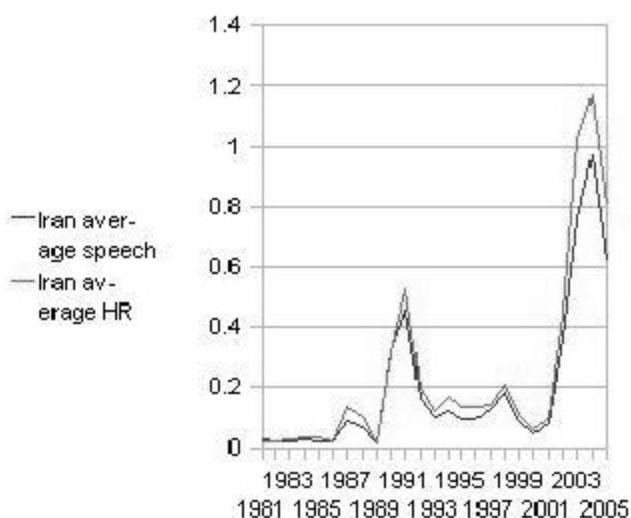
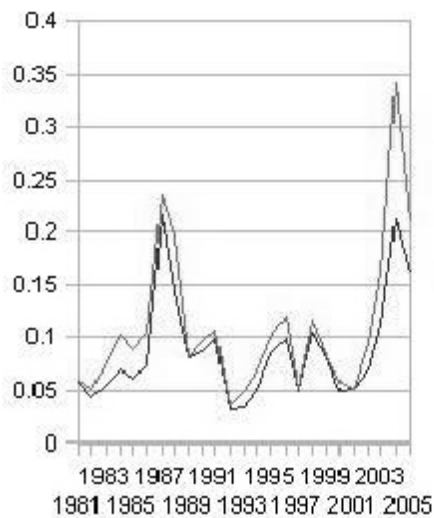
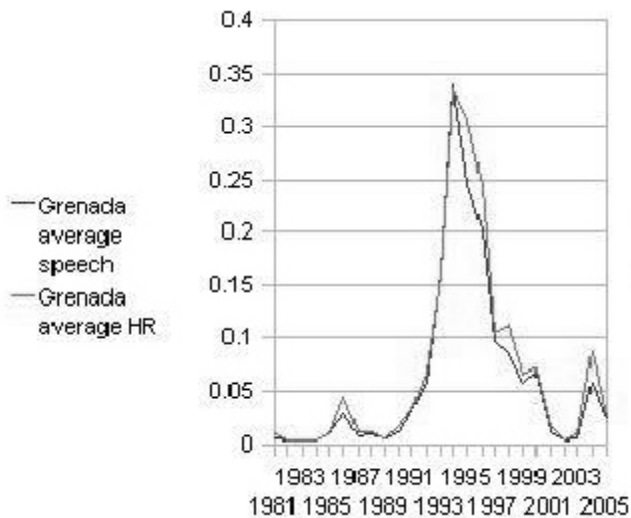
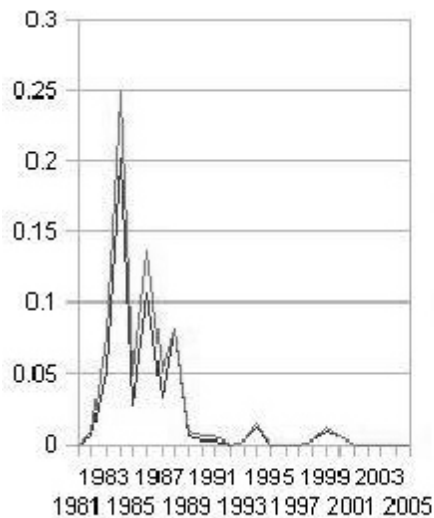
— Germany average speech  
— Germany average HR

<sup>50</sup> I checked to see whether the results from my search of presidential mentions of Colombia was confounded by the 2003 Space Shuttle Colombia disaster in which seven US astronauts were killed. However, this appears not to have substantially skewed my results; in fact, 2003 is the only year of the GW Bush presidency in which Colombia is not among the most frequently mentioned.



Ostensibly intervening on behalf of American medical students threatened by a coup, Reagan ordered a military intervention of *Grenada* in 1983 which returned the previous government to power. Following this action, the US did not involve itself significantly in Grenadian affairs, although Reagan made frequent subsequent references to the success of the invasion during campaign appearances in support of Republican candidates.

The US became concerned about *Haiti* after the 1990 election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was deposed in a military coup several months after his election. Violent repression by coup leaders led to a humanitarian disaster that Clinton hoped to stem through US-led military involvement. Aristide was returned to power and the country receded from the US agenda.

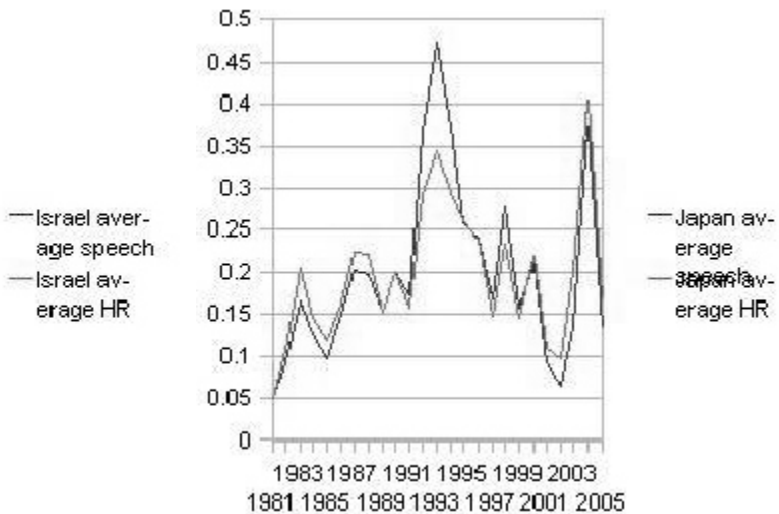
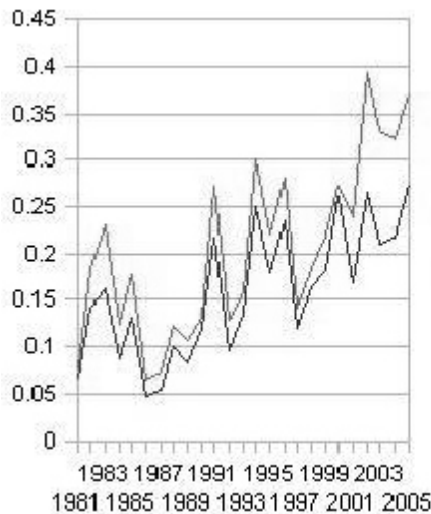


Despite the considerable attention paid to it at the outset of my study period due to the hostage-taking at the American embassy in Tehran, *Iran* was the subject of variable presidential interest between 1981 and 2005. Nonetheless, even periods of real military tension – particularly around the US shutdown of an Iranian civilian aircraft in 1988 – did not generate as much attention as the Iran-Contra scandal occurring during Reagan’s tenure.

US policy had been relatively positive towards *Iraq* through the 1980s, but that ended abruptly when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in August 1990. In response, George H.W. Bush ordered the beginning of the Gulf War, which lasted until mid-1991. However, air operations and efforts to disarm Iraq continued throughout the 1990s and into the new millennium. In 2003, the US invaded Iraq again, this time deposing Saddam Hussein and installing a new government.

*Israel* enjoyed strong support and substantial attention from US presidents throughout the great majority of the study period. This attention increased further under GW Bush, whose focus on terrorism led to frequent references to Israeli experiences of terrorism and whose evangelical political base supported unequivocal support for Israel.

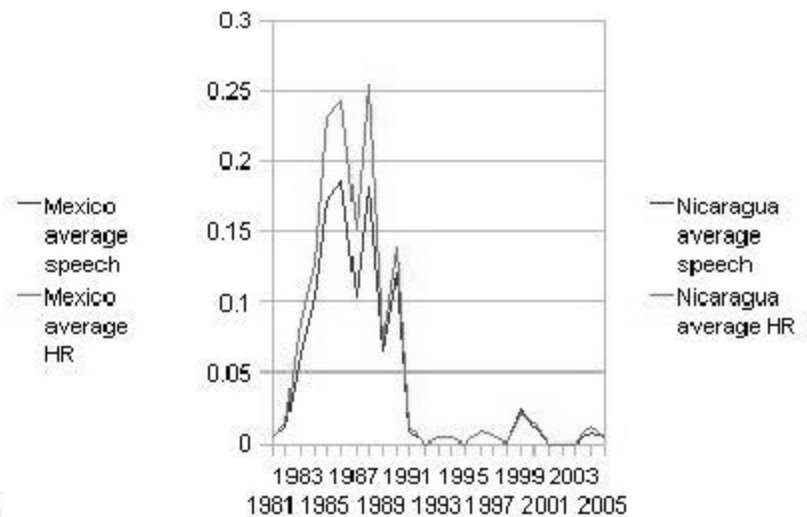
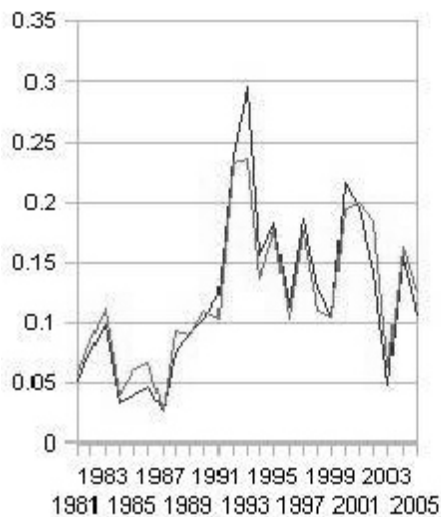
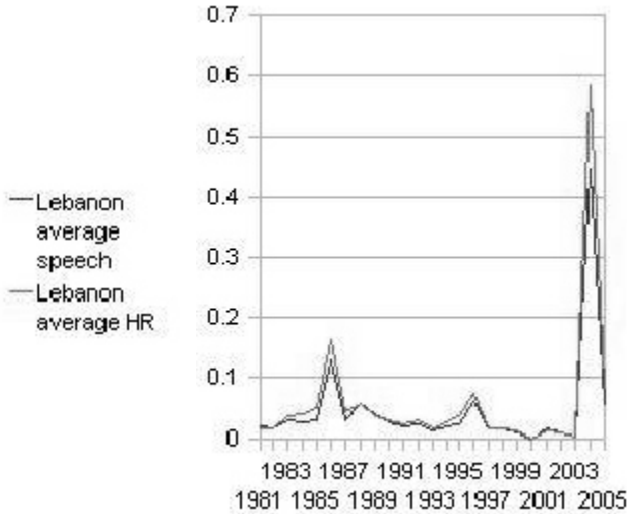
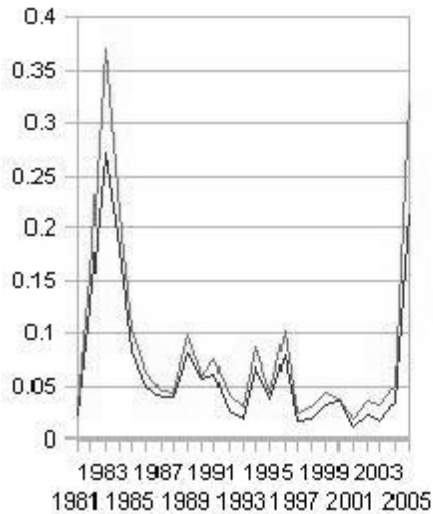
*Japan* remained a valuable trade partner for the US throughout the 1981 to 2005 period, although relations became strained in the early 1990s when Japan maintained high tariffs on US goods despite the substantial trade imbalance. The Japanese economy soured and tension dissipated. Subsequently, during GW Bush’s tenure relations with Japan warmed when the country sent soldiers to support the US-led coalition in Iraq.



*Lebanon* was of intermittently importance to US foreign policy in the period studied, principally as a result of being engulfed in a civil war for ten of those twenty-five years. To help reduce the security threat that this war posed to Israel, the US under Reagan briefly and ignominiously involved itself in the Lebanese civil war, which also increased the US focus on Lebanon for a period of time.

Though the US had poor relations with *Libya* throughout the 1970s, Libya became a more salient enemy of the US during the second Reagan administration, when after a series of sea-

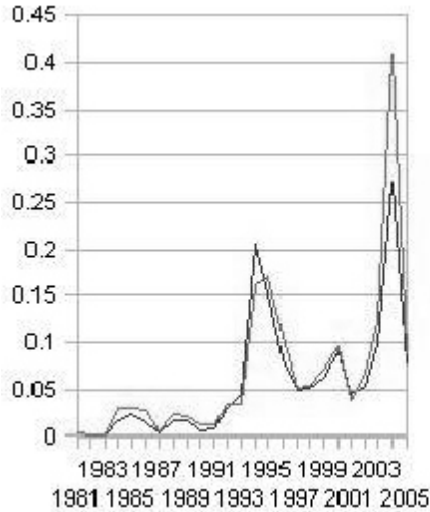
based incidents Libyan agents bombed an American-frequented disco in West Berlin. The US retaliated by bombing Tripoli. In 1988, Libya sponsored the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. Libya then receded in relevance, up until their much-praised decision in 2003 to renounce their nuclear weapons program and to compensate Pan Am bombing victims.



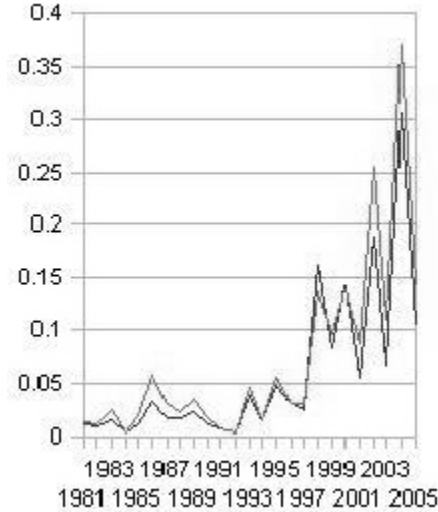
*Mexico* is a vital US trade partner and an immediate neighbor, resulting in a reasonably high degree of attention even in the absence of particular policy initiatives. However, Clinton was particularly attentive to Mexico during the period of NAFTA's passage and the 1990s witnessed a growing interest in illegal immigration issues as the US economy expanded.

*Nicaragua* was a particular concern of Ronald Reagan's from the beginning of his time in office, as he believed that the Sandinista government to be an important foothold for Cuban-style

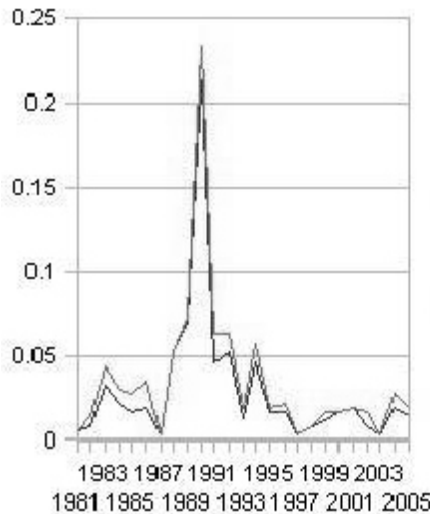
communism on the American mainland. When Congress in 1983 prohibited him from funding the Nicaraguan Contra rebels, his administration began a secret effort to fund the group through selling arms to Iran. The discovery of the Iran-Contra Affair in 1986 led to several years of public inquiry and trials. In 1990, Nicaragua again became a topic of frequent mention when the



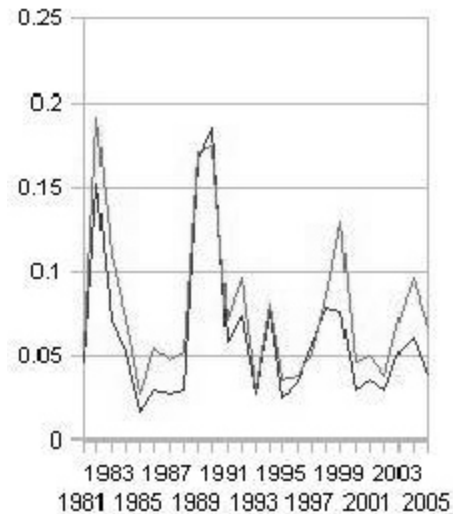
— North Korea average speech  
— North Korea average HR



— Pakistan average speech  
— Pakistan average HR



— Panama average speech  
— Panama average HR



— Poland average speech  
— Poland average HR

Sandinista government was ousted.

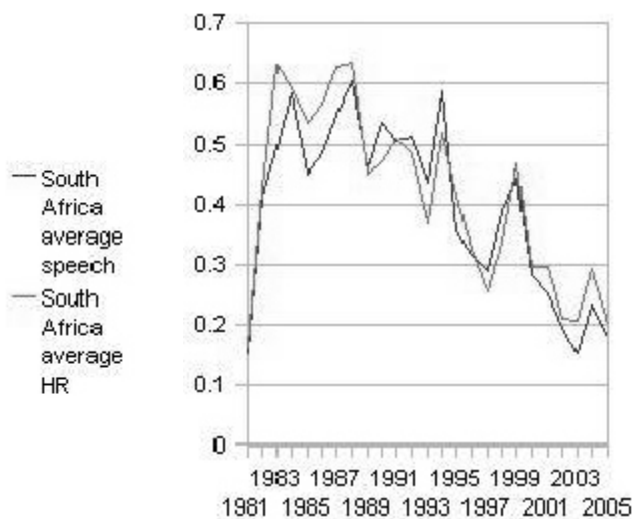
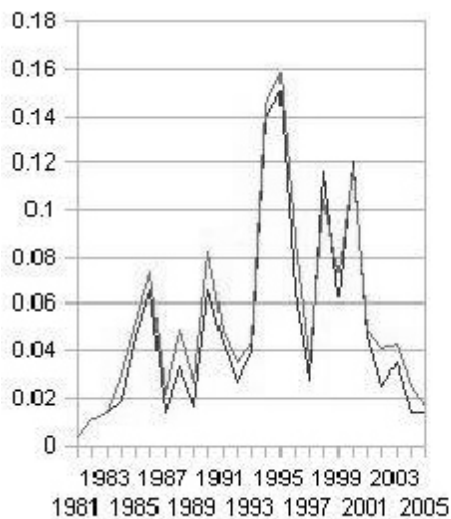
Relations between the US and *North Korea* have been hostile since the Korean War in the 1950s. During the mid-1990s, the development of an Agreed Framework to address North Korean nuclear ambitions led to a brief period of increased hope for a resolution, but neither the US or North Korea adhered to the agreement and relations again quickly eroded. GW Bush

entered office opposing the existing US approach to North Korea and labeled the state part of the “Axis of Evil”. In response, North Korea accelerated its nuclear program.

Since 1979, the US and *Pakistan* have had a relationship which is governed mainly by Pakistan’s antagonistic relations with India and close relationship with Afghanistan. When Afghanistan is a greater American concern the US is friendly towards Pakistan; when Afghanistan is less important to US objectives, the US is critical of Pakistan’s threatening posture towards India. As a result, Pakistan was of greatest interest to the US during the late Clinton years – the post-Cold War, when Afghanistan was unimportant – and again during the US military involvement in Afghanistan after 2001.

Though *Panama* struggled with its military government’s tendency to use violence against its citizens, the country was not the subject of substantial US presidential attention until 1988, when Reagan froze Panamanian assets in response to the escalating abuses. In 1989, George HW Bush then ordered the US to invade Panama in response to Panamanian General Noriega’s decision to annul unfavorable election results.

*Poland* represents an interesting mix of positive roles from the US perspective. Initially portrayed as a Cold War victim during the Reagan era, it came to represent an interesting mix of protege and ally in the rhetoric of George W. Bush during the 2003 Iraq War. While Poland was mainly an attractive, helpless target of the Soviet Union under communism, Poland and the US have since come to provide one another with strategic support in riskier foreign policy ventures:



Poland was one of just four countries to support the US with 1,000 troops in the Iraq War, while the US has come to provide Poland military support against an unpredictable Russia.

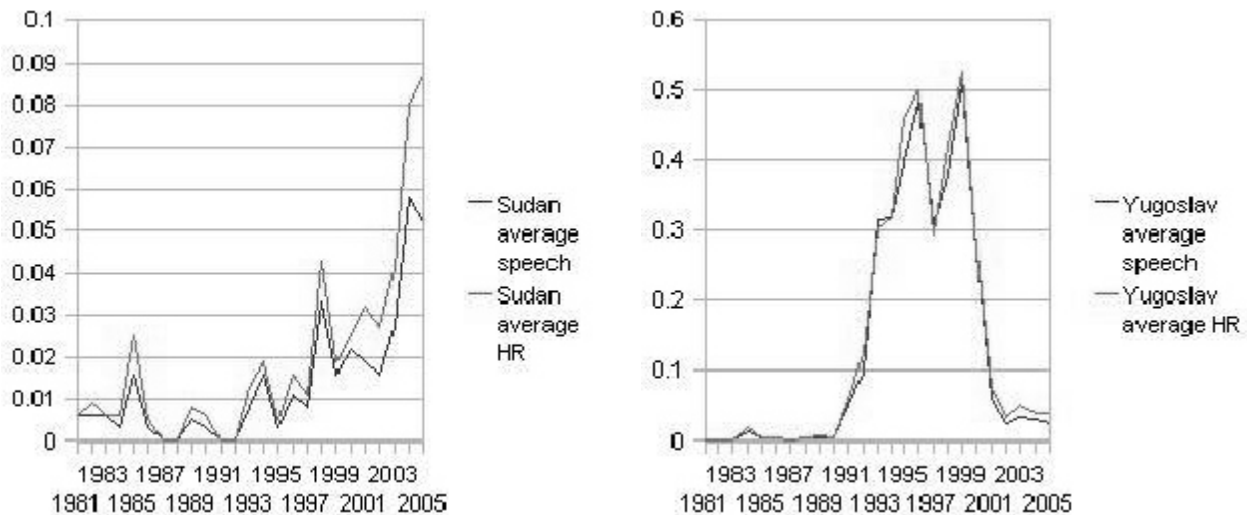
*South Africa* played two main roles for presidents in the study period: Reagan viewed South Africa as an important anti-Soviet African ally and publicly supported it despite wide public disapproval of South Africa’s policy of apartheid, while GHW Bush and Clinton were able to reflect on (and claim credit for America’s contribution to) South Africa’s dismantling of apartheid as an inspiring victory for human rights.



The *Soviet Union* represented the top US defense priority during its existence. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia remained a substantial foreign policy priority. US attention to Russia increased at the end of the 1990s as Clinton traveled to Moscow, supported new loans to assist Russia during a deep financial crisis and addressed Russian support for Serbia during the US-led Kosovo war. Relations with Russia then cooled under GW Bush.<sup>51</sup>

*Sudan* was in a state of civil war for the entire 1980-2005 period. The US was somewhat involved in helping to maintain access for humanitarian aid and helping to prevent the conflict from spilling over into neighboring states, but Sudan only became a frequent subject of presidential speech after US embassies were bombed in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi in 1998. The US bombed a large pharmaceutical plant in Sudan which had been identified as a terrorist cell. Following this incident, Sudan became a frequent subject of attention from George W. Bush, due to massive human rights abuses committed during a new wave of its civil war.

*Yugoslavia* became a major topic of presidential discussion starting in 1991, the year in



which the country’s violent break-up began. The US then participated in two wars in the former Yugoslavia: one in Bosnia, in 1995, and one in Serbia and Montenegro, in 1999. US troops then took part in NATO’s post-war stabilization efforts in both countries.<sup>52</sup>

#### Observations on Trends in Heroic Framing

The charts provided with reference to the countries mentioned above demonstrate the varying nature of presidential attention to individual foreign policy subjects as well as varying

<sup>51</sup> I created the presidential speech variable for the “Soviet Union” by searching for presidential mentions of the Soviet Union or Russia.

<sup>52</sup> I created the presidential speech trend for Yugoslavia by searching for presidential mentions of Yugoslavia, Bosnia or Serbia.



tendencies in the use of heroic rhetoric in connection with these subjects. Viewed individually, however, they are difficult to imagine as parts of an integrated foreign policy universe. As we can observe by noting the annual speech and heroic rhetoric averages for each country, not all contemporary foreign policy issues receive anywhere near the same amount of attention. Moreover, the pattern in foreign policy attention changed substantially over the 1981 to 2005 time period. In the beginning of the period, attention to the Soviet Union strongly dominated all other foreign policy targets, while in the middle of the period a number of different foreign policy interests maintained similar levels of presidential attention, and towards the end of the period Afghanistan and Iraq received a level of attention more substantial than any other country during the study time period – while an additional set of countries simultaneously maintained their level of priority from the 1990s. Overall, during the 1981 to 2005 period the US foreign policy universe became much more complex and the subject of greater presidential focus. Presidential speech also attained new heights in heroic rhetoric, with GW Bush’s use of heroic rhetoric in the context of Iraq nearly doubling Reagan’s most substantial use of heroic rhetoric, in the context of the Soviet Union.

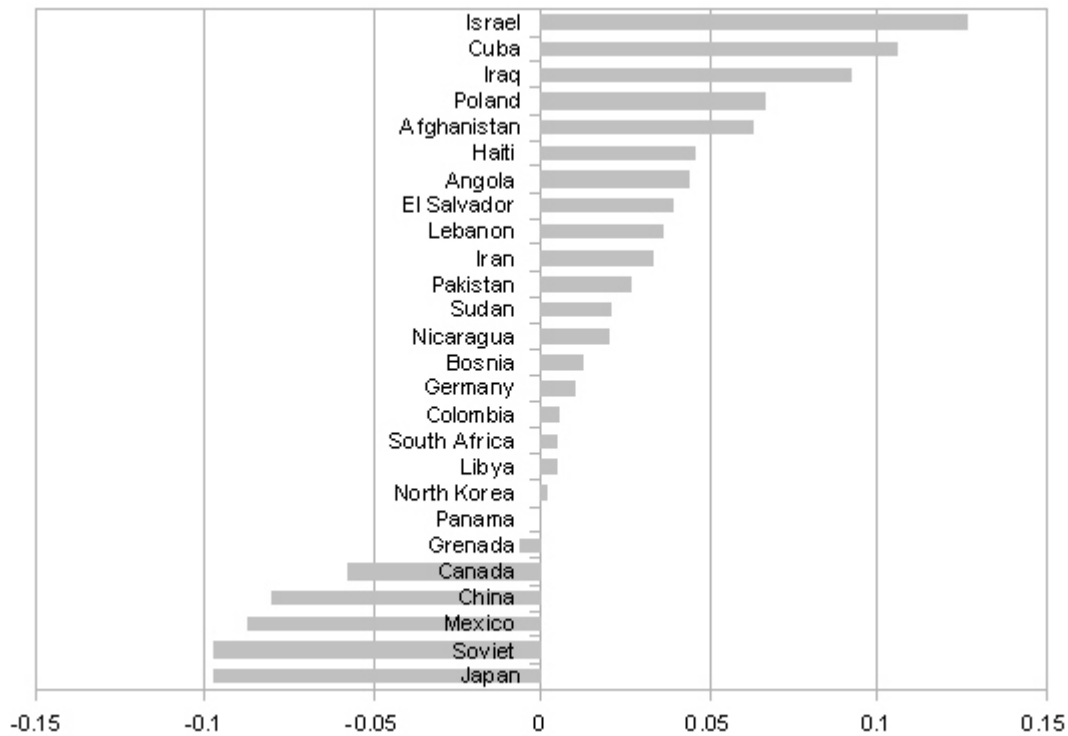


Figure 4.1: Ranking: ratio of average heroic rhetoric to average total speeches, weighted by president

Despite the rather complicated nature of foreign policy speech when considered as a whole, it is possible to make regular observations of the president’s use of heroic rhetoric in the context of foreign policy priorities. The presidents’ use of heroic rhetoric in connection with particular

foreign policy subjects does tends to accord with some of my earlier predictions (See Figure 4.1.) When speeches high in heroic rhetoric are compared to overall speeches in the context of individual countries, presidents use less heroic rhetoric in connection with countries which are part of the US foreign policy universe primarily on the basis of our strong trading relations (Japan, China, Mexico, Canada, Germany). Presidents also consistently used less heroic rhetoric in connection with the Soviet Union than might be predicted by its status as Cold War competitor. Though presidents exhibited periodic flights of heroic framing with regard to the Soviet Union, their speech on average was more pragmatic and measured. Meanwhile, this was not true in the case of Israel and Cuba: the tone of presidential speech about these countries was not more muted just because these countries are familiar members of the US foreign policy agenda. Presidential speech about Cuba and Israel tended to contain the most heroic rhetoric, on average, of any foreign policy subject. This may be because Cuban Americans and Jewish Americans attend closely to presidential speech about Cuba and Israel and so presidents may see greater electoral benefits in speaking with rhetorical intensity about those countries in particular.

Participation in actual military conflict with a country was generally reflected in higher relative levels of heroic rhetoric, but sometimes this was not the case. Grenada and Panama – along with Libya and North Korea, with which the US had long-term hostilities – were spoken about during the 1981-2005 with a middling amount of heroic rhetoric, on average. In speeches about most other countries with which the US had regularly conflictual relationships, presidents on average used a relatively high level of heroic rhetoric.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I described my method of developing a set of countries which I could use as a context for evaluating the causes and effects of presidential use of heroic framing. My process involved identifying annual presidential priorities by discovering which countries presidents mentioned most often each year. I validated my frequency-of-mention approach by testing whether or not it supported two common-sense hypotheses: that presidents should have mostly consistent foreign policy priorities through their tenure in office and that presidents should have mostly consistent foreign policy priorities across consecutive years. Both of these hypotheses were supported by this method of identifying presidential foreign policy priorities.

I then generated lists of most frequently mentioned countries for each year and discovered which countries were most frequently mentioned across the entire 1981-2005 period. Selecting a set of 25 countries from this list, I then charted the president's annual average daily number of speeches (and annual average daily proportion of heroic rhetoric in those speeches) mentioning each of these countries. I presented these charts and a brief description of the periods in which each country represented a high presidential priority. Finally, I provided a charts which documented the relative heroic framing used in connection with each of these states when considering them all together over time.

Now, the charts I provided in this chapter give some sense of the overall magnitude of attention given to major foreign policy targets over the course of my study. They also provide some sense of country-specific trends in presidential use of heroic rhetoric. However, in order to see specifically what may lead to an increase in heroic rhetoric – or in order to see what kind of

effects heroic rhetoric might have – I will need to look at a further set of variables. The next chapters will offer ways to consider causes for and effects of presidential deployment of heroic rhetoric.

## Chapter 5: Uses of Heroic Framing: Persuasion, Signaling, and Reassurance

Having identified a set of presidential foreign policy speech subjects, I could then use country-specific data to examine my hypotheses about heroic framing. In this chapter I use these country-specific variables to examine why presidents choose to use heroic rhetoric, to see what prompts them to use it, and to theorize what they may hope to accomplish through the act of heroic framing. As I discovered in Chapter 3, presidents seem to use heroic framing in connection with their policy priorities. Presidents use greater than average heroic framing in the context of issues which they have separately identified as being especially important. Why do they do so? And particularly, why do they do so in the realm of foreign policy?

Leading up to this point, I have proposed that presidents used heroic framing as an aspect of persuasion. If they use heroic framing in connection with their priority issues, it stands to reason that they believe that this rhetoric will allow them to generate more support for the policies they hope to enact. In the foreign policy domain, meanwhile, this implies a secondary effect as well. If presidents regularly use heroic framing in connection with their most prioritized issues, then foreign audiences could also reasonably expect to use presidential heroic framing as a measure of presidential commitment to foreign policies. Where the president uses heroic framing in connection with a military or hostile foreign policy, foreign audiences could interpret this as a form of presidential commitment to this policy. This kind of phenomenon is known as “signaling” in the international relations literature. To see whether presidential use of heroic framing might not be used just for persuasion but also for international signaling, I will investigate whether presidential use of heroic framing seems to correlate with when we would expect to see presidents intentionally issuing signals. If it does, this suggests that foreign audiences might regularly be treating elevated heroic framing as a signal of presidential intention.

I will also examine a second reason that the president would use heroic framing: in order to provide reassurance in response to a threatening or upsetting incident. I will flesh out the concept of the president’s ceremonial use of heroic framing and illustrate conditions under which we might be more likely to observe this reassuring use of symbolic presidential power. However, I will also discuss the ways in which having two distinct functions for similar language increases the potential for conflict. I will review how the signaling and reassurance functions of presidential heroic framing may become confused under some circumstances and result in an increased likelihood of foreign misperception of presidential intention.

### The Dual Function of Heroic Framing

Together, two conditions – when presidents wish to express support for a particular policy and when they seek to reassure the public after a threatening event – constitute the chief motivations for the president’s use of heroic framing. As I noted previously, these two presidential uses for heroic framing reflect the specific political nature of the presidency. The US president, as both the nation’s “interpreter” and a powerful political actor, can be seen to simultaneously perform two distinct rhetorical roles. The domestic public sometimes views the president primarily as the foremost national representative who provides the “official”

interpretation of major world events. Following threats and other upsetting events, audiences seek a president who is impartial, inspiring, and empowering. If ancient rhetorical traditions do fundamentally persist to contemporary times, what audiences also expect is that their leader will offer a reassuringly moralistic interpretation of international events. At the same time, the public understands that presidents are political agents who seek the achievement of specific policy goals. When presidents function in their political capacity, it seems appropriate for presidents to be partisan, persuasive, and to mobilize support for their policy preferences.

Because they play both partisan and national representational roles, presidents sometimes use heroic framing in both of these contexts. In line with the nation's expectations that the president will provide an official national response to publicized and upsetting events, presidents can heroically frame those events by praising the nation (or certain idealized citizens) and demonizing the sources of threat. In this situation, the heroic frame is useful because it reframes a threatening, unpredictable situation into one with a familiar narrative. Using the heroic frame, the president can predict an ultimate victory for the forces of good even when present circumstances are disheartening. Meanwhile, in line with the president's political interests, presidents can use heroic framing to create a sense of threat about an adversary in order to generate political support. In this situation the heroic frame becomes a useful persuasive technique when it casts the problem in terms of stark moral absolutes. For example, George W. Bush stated in 2002 that, "There's no middle ground when it comes to freedom and terror" (Bush 2002a). While opponents of Bush's policies may disagree with his implicit assertion that countries or individuals can belong solely to "freedom" or "terror," his statement is convincingly logical if we don't contest this premise. When he employs a heroic frame, the president can create stark moral categories. The very creation of these categories implies a behavioral imperative – the requirement to choose "freedom" or "terror," to stand "with us or against us" – and thereby functions as a persuasive rhetorical technique. Since presidents can use heroic framing both in the context of reassuring the public and in the context of persuading the public, how is it possible to know which of these goals motivates the president's use of heroic framing? Unfortunately, given that the president can always be seen to be occupying both the roles of interpreter and persuader it may be impossible to entirely separate these two speech categories. In reality, political persuasion and ceremonial moral uplift frequently blur together (Stuckey 2006, Too 2001). Political persuasion is often accomplished in the course of ceremonial speeches. Political speeches, meanwhile, often incorporate stories of personal virtue and passages of praise or blame. Moreover, when we try to look at the role of heroic framing in these two kinds of speeches, the language of heroic framing itself may add to the confusion. Due to the heroic frame's evocation of moral absolutes, heroic framing can make persuasion sound like ceremonial speech.

However, while it might be challenging to determine which of these goals motivates the presidential use of heroic framing, it is nonetheless important to try to identify the president's motivation if we want to understand the implications of the president's speech. In particular, we want to know whether heroic framing reliably signals presidential commitment to a particular policy. Presidential commitment is a valuable thing to be able to measure if we want to be able to measure a president's effectiveness at achieving his priorities, or if we want to know where he is likely to be placing the bulk of his persuasive effort. Moreover, if we find that the president's

heroic framing works to draw positive public attention to his policies, the framing may itself constitute a successful form of persuasion.

If it turns out that the president's use of heroic framing does reveal the degree of his commitment to a particular policy, then it makes sense that attentive audiences will have observed this. Furthermore, it is reasonable to assume that certain foreign audiences are among the more attentive members of the president's audience, at least with regard to speech concerning them. Presidents are likely to be aware of this scrutiny and probably try to plan their communications with an awareness of both domestic and international audiences in mind.

Because the US is a significant military power, foreign audiences are likely to be concerned about the possibility of threats from the US and will seek to discover what they can about American intentions through signals contained in presidential speech. If the president is aware of their attention, his decision to use vivid heroic imagery while talking about an existing or potential conflict may serve as an effective way for him to communicate his genuine interest in that conflict to relevant foreign audiences. I reviewed in Chapter 2 how international relations scholars use the term "signaling" to describe the process by which state leaders alert one another that they are willing to go to war to achieve a preferred political outcome. Signaling is often achieved by creating "audience costs," which the president does when he makes either public threats or forceful public speeches about an international conflict issue. Making threats or forceful speeches about conflicts are a way for leaders to "engage the national honor" (Fearon 1994, 581) and to effectively tie the country's reputation to the outcome of that conflict. Citizens will not want to see their nation dishonored and will disapprove of leaders who raise the stakes of a conflict but then make their country appear weak by backing down. Because of this fear, leaders should expect that citizens will punish them if they back down after they issue a threat about another country. Rational leaders will therefore seek to avoid punishment by not issuing threats about other countries unless they are sure they are willing to follow through.

This phenomenon of "signaling" provides one important reason for presidents to be careful in the language they use about foreign policy matters. However, the existence of this phenomenon presents yet another consideration. While international observers may seek to find signals about presidential intentions in his speech, this doesn't necessarily mean that those observers will always interpret the president's signals accurately. Attentive international observers may sometimes misinterpret powerful presidential language to indicate increasing hostility, when it may only have been meant as verbal "red meat" for domestic consumption. When the president's heroic framing leads other states to believe he plans to escalate, but this is not actually his intention, we can see in this mistaken interpretation a kind of undesired signaling.

This type of misreading seems particularly likely to occur when the president uses heroic framing in the context of a ceremonial speech. Since the president may sometimes use heroic framing mainly for ceremonial purposes and not for persuasion, there is the possibility that a foreign audience might read persuasive or signaling intent within the president's heroic framing when none was really meant. If the president uses heroic framing with a ceremonial intent – that is, if he employs it in order to reassure the public during a threatening time – then there's a good possibility that he intends only to reassure the public and not to create or signal support for a military action. However, international audiences may not fully understand the reason for the president's rhetoric and, conservatively, may identify an increased military risk.



Furthermore, even if the president does not intend to signal when he uses heroic framing in a ceremonial context, it might not be easy for him to defuse an international escalation resulting from a misinterpretation of his rhetoric. If the president has reliable private channels to the country he demonizes, he may be able to diffuse the tension that way. Even with those channels, however, his public speech may compel the targeted officials to escalate anyway so as not to look weak before their own public. Despite the president's lack of military intention, the foreign audience might nonetheless prepare for intensified hostilities. This unintended effect from an instance of US-directed ceremonial heroic framing might be considered to be a form of misperception due to different "evoked sets," as described by Robert Jervis (1976). The ceremonial context represents a strongly different "evoked set" from the universe of military signaling, leading to the possibility that presidential language which could legitimately be appropriate to either could be used with reference to one context but interpreted by a foreign power as being intended for the other.

Overall, since there are two main reasons the president could be using heroic framing and two kinds of audience, we need to consider four possible varieties of speech effect.

What effects might a president achieve through his use of heroic rhetoric?		
Effect of/on:	Ceremonial use of heroic rhetoric	Persuasive use of heroic rhetoric
Domestic audience	Inspiration	Policy support
Foreign audience	Misperception	Signaling

Table 5.1

Table 1 provides a way to think about the fact that presidents have two main reasons to use heroic framing and speak to two main kinds of audience. Presidents use heroic framing persuasively, in connection with their policy priorities. Domestically, this is intended to generate support for the president's preferred policies; the signal it sends to foreign audiences is a generally accurate reflection of the genuine commitment presidents have to this policy. Presidents also use heroic framing ceremonially, in order to reassure the public after an upsetting event. Domestically, this is intended to inspire and comfort the public. Differently from the president's persuasive use of heroic framing, however, the ceremonial use of heroic framing does not accurately reflect a presidential policy commitment. Any signaling which foreign audiences interpret from the president's ceremonial use of heroic framing is incorrect and constitutes misperception, in the sense that it is a logical but mistaken interpretation of the president's rhetorical choice.

### Is Heroic Framing Used to Persuade?

The relationship I identified between presidential use of heroic framing and presidential priorities in Chapter 3 demonstrated a general link between heroic framing and priority areas, but it did not provide a detailed picture of how this kind of connection operates at the level of

individual foreign policies. In order to develop a clearer picture of how heroic framing relates to the achievement of his foreign policy goals, I examined the president's use of heroic framing in the context of foreign aid disbursements. Looking at the relationship between presidential heroic framing and a financial policy outcome like foreign aid disbursements is attractive because it offers a clear and regular way to measure the relationship between presidential persuasive rhetoric and changes in policy. Meanwhile, not only is the relationship between presidential heroic rhetoric and foreign aid disbursements interesting from an academic perspective. This subject is also likely to be one of practical interest to both domestic and foreign observers. One important way for domestic and foreign audiences to evaluate the authenticity of presidential commitment would be to see whether the president can successfully "put his money where his mouth is" – that is, to evaluate whether he's capable of securing increases in foreign aid for his own foreign policy priorities.

Presidents play a key role in supporting foreign aid programs for foreign allies (Lancaster 2000).<sup>53</sup> Even if they don't always achieve passage of their preferred programs or get as much money as they seek, I expect that their advocacy would have a regular impact on the amount of aid money offered to favored countries – that is, countries that the president wanted to aid would generally see a bump up in their allotments, while countries that were of less interest to the president would see their allotments stagnate or drop. If presidents do use heroic rhetoric in connection with a particular country as a way to signal their interest in increasing US commitment to that country, then we should see a positive correlation between the president's use of heroic rhetoric and the amount of aid money distributed to the country in question.

To determine whether this hypothesis has merit, I looked at the twenty countries in my study which received US aid for some significant proportion of the 1981-2005 period. I recorded the average number of speeches per day that the president mentioned each country for each year, the average daily amount of heroic rhetoric used by the president in connection with each country for each year, and the amount of assistance provided by the US to each country each year, as reported in the USAID Greenbook.<sup>54</sup> For the most part, if my hypothesis is supported I expect to see a correlation between the president's use of heroic rhetoric in connection with a country and the amount of aid provided to that country in the following year, since debates over appropriations generally take place the year before the funds are disbursed. However, in cases where the US intervened militarily – particularly in the case of brief interventions, such as Grenada and Panama – I expect that there is a greater chance of seeing a high same-year correlation, since the Congress would be likely to pass an emergency spending bill to account for the cost of hosting the intervention and its immediate aftermath.

Unfortunately, the test as I perform it here is an imperfect one since the USAID data measures the assistance given over the calendar year, while appropriations debates and disbursements are tied to the US Federal fiscal year (October to September.) To truly test the effect of

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<sup>53</sup> Carol Lancaster (2000) reports an even stronger assertion of this notion, as reported by a sitting Congressman: any foreign aid request "can pass if it has no single-issue red flags and if it's supported by the president" (46).

<sup>54</sup> The USAID Greenbook is available online at <http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/data/>.

persuasive power on aid disbursement it would be necessary to compare speech variables with foreign aid disbursed in the last quarter of the current year and the first three-quarters of the following year. Given this inaccuracy, my test should therefore be considered an approximation. I think it is an acceptable one since rather than attempting to determine the precise effect of presidential heroic framing on foreign aid allotments, I am just seeking an empirical grounding for my suggestion that heroic framing plays a regular role when the president seeks to increase the nation's commitment to a particular foreign partner.

After listing the average daily number of presidential speeches per day mentioning each country and the average daily amount of heroic rhetoric used by the president in those speeches, I determined the correlation between these annual averages and the annual foreign aid allotment to each country. For both average speeches and average heroic rhetoric, I looked at the correlations between these observations and aid during the same year and aid during the year after the observed amounts of speech and rhetoric.

<b>COUNTRIES WITH POSITIVE CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SPEECH/HR AND AID</b>				
	Column I	Column II	Column III	Column IV
	Speech and next year's aid	Speech and same year's aid	HR and next year's aid	HR and same year's aid
Iraq	0.881	0.891	0.913	0.897
Afghanistan	0.869	0.851	0.872	0.841
El Salvador	0.793	0.625	0.83	0.681
Sudan	0.683	0.546	0.709	0.555
Yugoslavia/Bosnia	0.688	0.628	0.698	0.645
Lebanon	0.546	0.373	0.578	0.368
Panama	0.369	0.823	0.344	0.832
Grenada	0.305	0.816	0.353	0.816
Colombia	-0.356	-0.249	0.025	0.429
Haiti	0.359	0.376	0.368	0.425
Mexico	0.081	0.251	0.161	0.337
China	0.281	0.206	0.371	0.301
South Africa	-0.09	0.259	-0.104	0.247
Poland	0.554	0.2	0.447	0.11
Pakistan	0.019	-0.009	0.117	0.094
Nicaragua	0.142	-0.08	0.065	-0.146
<b>COUNTRIES WITH NEGATIVE CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SPEECH/HR AND AID</b>				
	Speech and next year's aid	Speech and same year's aid	HR and next year's aid	HR and same year's aid
Angola	-0.503	-0.528	-0.533	-0.558
Cuba	-0.362	-0.369	-0.167	-0.176
Israel	-0.514	-0.458	-0.577	-0.539
North Korea	-0.419	-0.373	-0.451	-0.373

Table 5.2

In Table 5.2, I listed these correlations in four categories, for each country receiving aid: correlations between average annual presidential speeches and foreign aid in the following year, correlations between average annual presidential speeches and foreign aid in the same year, correlations between average annual presidential heroic rhetoric and foreign aid in the following

year, and correlations between average annual presidential heroic rhetoric and foreign aid in the same year. In each category, I separated the countries for which there was a positive correlation between speech or rhetoric and aid and countries for which those relationships were negative. For the positive correlations, I then highlighted the highest out of a four-way comparison of the correlations for each country.

Overall, presidential speech variables (the number of presidential speeches mentioning each country and the averaged proportion of heroic rhetoric in those speeches) bore a strong relationship to foreign aid disbursements, suggesting a regular relationship between increases in presidential speeches and increases in foreign aid. Considering the top half of Table 2, we can see that there are positive correlations in sixteen out of twenty cases between variations in foreign aid and the two presidential speech variables. For ten out of sixteen of those relationships (eight in Column III and two in Column I), the stronger relationship was between a presidential speech variable and the following year's aid disbursement. This is the pattern we would expect to find where presidential speech and use of heroic rhetoric has a successfully persuasive effect on the Congressional debates over the next year's foreign aid packages. For the remaining six instances of positive relationships between presidential speech variables and foreign aid disbursements, those relationships were same year (Column II and Column IV), which is to say that there was likely to be less of a lagged impact from presidential speech on foreign aid than there was to be a same-year effect. As expected, this occurred in the case of relatively brief military interventions, such as in the case of Grenada, Panama, and Haiti, where we would expect Congress to provide irregular same-year emergency appropriations to support the US intervention and aftermath. However, a stronger correlation between presidential speech variables and same-year foreign aid disbursements did also occur in the cases of Colombia, Mexico and South Africa, which did not experience US interventions.

Heroic rhetoric proved to be a better predictor of the following year's foreign aid provision than my simple measure of presidential speeches. In eight out of ten cases for which speech or rhetoric positively correlated with next-year aid provision, the strongest correlations were between the president's average use of heroic rhetoric and following year's aid. There were two cases – Poland and Nicaragua – in which speech was a better predictor of aid in the following year. Poland appears simply to be an anomalous case, but Nicaragua represents an interesting paradox of presidential use of heroic framing. Although Reagan used considerable heroic rhetoric in connection with Nicaragua during his time in office, since Nicaragua was congressionally barred from receiving US foreign aid through the 1980s the president's heroic rhetoric could play no role in increasing the amount of foreign aid. The US began aiding Nicaragua relatively substantially under George H.W. Bush, although the country was far less of a priority for him than for his predecessor.

When the stronger relationship exists between presidential speech variables and the same year foreign aid disbursement, this is often an indicator of a situation in which there was a single-year intervention. These were situations in which both the number of presidential speeches and the president's use of heroic rhetoric both increased dramatically from their previous levels; similarly, low levels of aid skyrocketed in the year of the US intervention. In the cases of Grenada and Panama, both presidential interest and aid levels then fell off again just as quickly as they had grown. Haiti, meanwhile, retained higher levels of both presidential interest and aid

for several years following the US intervention. In the cases of a stronger same-year effect, although it was not true of every single case the president's use of heroic framing was again more likely to predict aid than was a simpler measurement of presidential attention.

As a final observation on this set of correlations, it is interesting to note that in several cases there appears to be a negative relationship between aid and my two variables. Israel is the largest outlier, with a substantially negative relationship between the amount of aid provided to Israel and the amount of presidential speech and rhetoric focused on Israel. Israel is also the recipient of the largest amount of aid between 1981 and 2005, both in my particular set of 20 countries and overall. It received nearly twice as much aid as Iraq, the recipient of the second-largest amount of aid in my study, and almost five times as much as Pakistan, the recipient of the third-largest amount of aid in my study. Because of this substantial difference, the dynamic for determining aid to Israel is likely to also be different from the dynamic for determining aid to different countries. More political actors are likely to strongly affect the decision beyond just the president. Meanwhile, Angola, Cuba, and North Korea also exhibit a negative correlation between the aid they received and presidential speech and rhetoric. Basically, these countries are (or were) US antagonists who received money after they became less threatening or less troublesome. Cuba only began to receive aid (and at that, quite minimal amounts) once it no longer posed as salient a threat to the US. Similarly, while Angola became a lot less interesting to US presidents after the end of the Cold War, it simultaneously enlarged its own "peace dividend" by enjoying a larger aid allotment as member of a region-wide US aid program. North Korea received aid principally as a result of Clinton's temporarily successful negotiations to limit their nuclear development. As that relationship became more strained once more – and North Korea became the subject of more presidential speech again – their aid allotment was reduced.

Overall, the findings from this test demonstrate that heroic framing is likely to be used as a persuasive rhetorical technique in connection with presidential foreign aid priorities. In this test I demonstrated that the president's interest in a country, as demonstrated through an increase in the amount of heroic rhetoric he uses in connection with that country, generally correlates with increases in the amount of aid that country receives in the following year. This regular connection between increases in presidential heroic rhetoric and increases in foreign aid suggests that the president's use of heroic rhetoric would indeed serve as a good signal to interested observers regarding what the president views as a priority and where the president is likely to be placing his persuasive power.

The use of presidential heroic rhetoric in connection with foreign aid also suggests that the notion of "signaling" might be usefully extended beyond its present association with conflict signaling. While the signaling literature has tended to focus on conflict alone, I think it behooves us to consider how "forceful speech" can have connotations for other important policies beyond military intervention. Matthew Baum (2004) notes that presidential speech serves to increase the salience of an international relationship. Thinking of signaling in that light, we might think about how increased salience might mean more than a simple willingness to fight. Rather, increased salience might be more likely to signal increased commitment, an intensification of whatever relationship exists between the US and the foreign policy target. While this could mean military intervention, there are a variety of other ways that the relationship between two states might be intensified. If the relationship is antagonistic, increased antagonism might take a variety of forms,

including economic sanctions, support for this target's enemies, or a curtailment of diplomatic privileges. Meanwhile, we might also consider the possibilities of "peaceful signaling": signaling an increased commitment to allied targets, meaning that the president seeks to advocate policies of greater assistance. In fact, by moving away from looking solely at signals about war, we can look at the role of rhetorical variables in the context of a more realistic picture of how states interact with one another – a universe of interactions filled with decisions about money, privileges, and shifting alliances.

### Could Heroic Framing Function as a Form of Signaling?

Meanwhile, it is certainly also useful to consider how presidential heroic framing functions within the more conventional definition of signaling. Signaling is the notion that the leaders of other states will take seriously another leader's public commitment to escalating hostility since threatening leaders will be punished by their constituents if they back down after issuing a threat. A preliminary question I face in this present project is whether the president's use of heroic framing in itself constitutes "a threat." After examining this question, I will test the hypothesis that it does. If so, then I will evaluate whether the president's use of heroic rhetoric correlates well enough with the period preceding US initiation of a conflict to suggest that it would serve as a reliable signal to attentive foreign audiences.

My question of whether heroic framing constitutes a threat in the signaling context highlights a certain lack of clarity on this point in the relevant literature. As it turns out, the question of what constitutes a publicly-issued threat is a challenging one to answer. Even the Correlates of War project, which takes on as part of its job the determination of what constitutes a verbal threat, acknowledges that the definition of these threats is relatively subjective. The project's coding manual cautions coders that:

Threats are often transmitted in ambiguous diplomatic language, making them hard to identify and interpret. Diplomats often refer to the extreme, dire, serious, or dangerous consequences of an act without necessarily conveying that a threat to use force exists. (Correlates of War Project 2000, 4)

Similarly, the literature on misperception by Robert Jervis (1976) and others reveals the frequency with which states misinterpret the behavior of other states as a form of threat. Given the widespread observation of this problem, it is unsurprising that "threat" and "forceful speech" are similarly underspecified in the context of testing signaling theory. This problem is so persistent that some scholars have elected to avoid it altogether. For example, Matthew Baum (2004) makes the reasonable choice to remove the whole question of "threat" from his consideration of how the president generates audience costs in his study of presidential decisions to "go private" with foreign policymaking. Instead of looking for specific "threats," he instead assumes that any mention of a country will make that country more salient to the public and thereby raise audience costs. This frees him to simply measure the number of mentions of a



relevant country in presidential speeches, rather than requiring him to identify which statements constitute threats and which are not threatening.

In my own work, rather than trying to pin down an exact definition for the slippery concept of threat, I propose to instead consider elaborating Fearon's concept of "forceful speech." Heroic framing, and specifically the related measurement of heroic rhetoric, may serve as one good way to measure "forceful speech." I see this as being a useful move since "forceful speech" removes some of the very specific expectations associated with the notion of "threat" – namely, that a threat will specify precisely what will be done to whom under which circumstances.<sup>55</sup> Further, the traditional notion of threat in the signaling context refers to communications between two competent, rational heads of state, which becomes problematic in cases where that assumption fails to hold. In the case of civil war, for instance, the president's forceful speech might target an insurgent group or an individual leader, but not the state as a whole. Heroic framing is a more flexible paradigm and does not require engagement with a rational head of state. In line with the logic of heroic rhetoric, the government or state as a whole might actually be praised for their fortitude and idealized as the innocent victims of a villainous individual or insurgent group. Heroic framing thereby allows "forceful speech" to apply to more fluid conflict dynamics than does a threat issued in the context of the traditional two-heads-of-state threat model. Not having a clear recipient for a clearly-defined "threat" turns out to be a useful feature for real-world application. During the period of my study, nearly all US military actions occurred in situations where state leadership was weak, in transition, or involved in a civil war.<sup>56</sup> Finally, my use of heroic rhetoric as a scale of forceful speech also has the advantage of being flexible to measure. Rather than the binary nature of considering whether a president has or has not issued a threat, forceful speech can be measured ordinally, as a continuum, or in relationship to a variety of different averages.

Stated more clearly as a function of Fearon's (1994) argument, I hypothesize that the US president's use of heroic rhetoric in connection with a conflict commits him to a policy of military escalation since citizens will punish their president if he suggests that the nation has a heroic obligation to act and then does nothing. Following from this, I further hypothesize that representatives of the states which are the targets of the heroic rhetoric will understand that the president's use of heroic rhetoric commits him to a policy of escalation and will respond accordingly.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> For example, in Michael Tomz's (2007) experimental work on the existence of audience costs, he asks respondents how they would feel if the president failed to intervene in a conflict where a country invaded its neighbor after promising "that if the attack continued, the U.S. military would push out the invaders" (9). This is quite specific with regard to target and conditions, making it an ideal form of threat – rather than what may actually be typical of threats.

<sup>56</sup> The invasion of Iraq provides the sole exception to this rule, while the US ouster of Noriega in 1989 presents a somewhat borderline case.

<sup>57</sup> Theories of rational war specify that the nature of target states' response should depend on whether those states are committed to pursuing their current course of action or are bluffing.

While heroic rhetoric thus seems like it has good potential to serve as a measurement of presidential signaling, it must be tested to verify that it actually serves this purpose. The signaling literature identifies that signaling works because the public recognizes the president's statement as a threat, understands that it implies a promise of action on their behalf, and punishes the president if he defects from this promise. This potential for punishment – the audience cost – is what makes the president's signal credible to the foreign policy target. The president's willingness to risk the public's punishment guarantees that he is genuinely interested in pursuing escalation. Now, while Michael Tomz's (2007) studies demonstrate the empirical existence of an intention among citizens to punish presidents for backing down (at least in the ideal-typical scenario), it is more complicated to measure any actual punishing of presidents who did back down, both because of the complication of studying presidential decisions *not* to make a threat (Schultz 2001) and because of the relatively limited opportunities to measure punishment. US citizens generally have the option to punish the president by failing to re-elect him only once every four years. Even then, presidential selection is determined by a number of issues beyond the president's foreign policy performance.<sup>58</sup> Overall, in the case of the US from 1981-2005, there is insufficient data to show a regular statistical effect between electoral punishment of presidents and their foreign policy threats – no matter what kind of language is used to convey those threats.

Given this problem, and given that the logic of audience costs nonetheless remains widely accepted, I will instead attempt to show that heroic rhetoric closely tracks an existing, accepted method of measuring relevant “threatening” speech. My first test compares the president's use of heroic rhetoric with the Correlates of War project's assessment that the United States issued a threat to another country. By looking first only at conflicts in which the US only issued a threat and did not take any other action, I can evaluate the use of heroic rhetoric in the context of “issuing a threat” while simultaneously excluding the possibility that the heroic rhetoric refers to ongoing military action. Over the 1981-2005 period, the Correlates of War project (CoW) found

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Some theorize that the way targeted states will respond should vary by regime-type (Slantchev 2006). If the state is democratic and has a free press, it is more likely to be able to make use of audience costs and respond publicly to the escalation; otherwise it might develop or negotiate policies in private which may or may not be immediately visible. However, since the president's cost-generating rhetoric was public, media in the targeted states are likely to have access to it as well. If there is any media openness at all, their reports of this rhetoric may result in domestic audiences in the targeted state feeling an increased sense of threat, leading to an increase in pressure on their leaders to respond aggressively (Kurizaki 2007, Weeks 2008).

<sup>58</sup> It might be possible to measure punishment through tracking changes in the president's public approval numbers as well. While this measurement would still suffer from similar selection issues, it seems like a more promising route on the whole since measurements are available with much greater frequency.

that the United States issued threats — but went no further – in the context of fourteen conflict events.<sup>59</sup>

To determine the pattern of the president’s use of heroic rhetoric in connection with these CoW-identified threat activities, I focused on the average number of speeches per day and the average heroic rhetoric in those speeches which mentioned the country in question. I took each case of “threat” and recorded the average presidential speeches per month which mentioned the relevant country in both the month preceding the president’s issuance of the threat and the month that the CoW identified as containing the threat. I then recorded the average presidential use of heroic rhetoric in connection with the relevant country for both of those months as well. I then compiled these averages into four lists: average speeches per day in the month preceding the threat; average speeches per day in the month containing the threat; average heroic rhetoric per day in the month preceding the threat and average heroic rhetoric per day in the month containing the threat.

Correspondence Between CoW Assessment of Verbal Threat and Presidential Speech Variables						
Conflict No.	Country target	Date	Ave speeches previous month	Ave speech same month	Ave HR prev month	Ave HR same month
2230	USSR	Sep 1984	0.226	0.733	0.29	0.8
2559	Germany	Sep 1985	0	0.067	0	0.067
2774	Iraq	Feb 1988	0.065	0.035	0.129	0.035
2982	USSR	Dec 1982	0.4	0.581	0.467	0.677
3088	Libya	Mar 1982	0	0.065	0	0.032
3550	Peru	Apr 1992	0	0.167	0	0.267
3900	Canada	Dec 1989	0.133	0.129	0.133	0.194
4065	China	Aug 1994	0.097	0.119	0.097	0.14
4065	S. Korea	Aug 1994	0.226	0.185	0.226	0.25
4183	Canada	May 1997	0.067	0.226	0.067	0.29
4196	Cuba	Feb 1996	0	0.103	0	0.103
4218	S. Korea, N. Korea	Mar 2000	0.034	0.194	0.034	0.258
4336	China	Mar 2001	0.036	0.097	0.071	0.161
4342	Russia	Apr 1999	0.419	0.5	0.452	0.7

Table 5.3

To assist visual comparison, I highlighted the larger number in comparing the previous with same month figures for both the presidential speech variable and the presidential heroic rhetoric variable. The highlighted figures in Table 5.3 demonstrate that both the average number of speeches per day and the average use of heroic rhetoric per day increased regularly in months identified by the CoW database as months in which the US made a threat against another country. However, while the average number of speeches per day increased in eleven out of the

<sup>59</sup> The US issued a threat in the context of one additional conflict, in 2000, but since the targets of the threat were Kosovar Albanian irregulars who were traveling between Albania, Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo it was a challenge to identify a multi-month country-target for the president’s heroic rhetoric. I therefore left this conflict out of my test.

fourteen cases, the average amount of heroic rhetoric increased in all but one of those cases.<sup>60</sup> This suggests that during times when the US president is perceived to have issued a verbal threat to another country, his use of heroic rhetoric in connection with that country provides a better estimate of this threat than does the frequency with which he speaks about the country.

I felt that the performance of my heroic rhetoric variable against the Correlates of War definition of threat offered a satisfactory demonstration that heroic rhetoric increases during times when observers felt that the US had issued a threat against another country. This was a necessary precondition to the possibility that heroic framing itself could be understood as a signal of threat or conflict escalation. Seeing this to be the case, I could then examine whether presidential heroic rhetoric could be seen to function as a signal in cases where the US actually did go to war.

I decided to take one last look at the presidential use of heroic rhetoric as a form of conflict signaling by looking at the relationship between presidential use of heroic rhetoric and the periods preceding actual military engagement. In my previous test, I looked only at how the president's speech changed during the month of the conflict event. However, looking only at the month of the event when actual fighting is taking place seems to miss the point of signaling, which must surely take place before the signaling country enters into a conflict event. This makes particular sense if we think about the multiple purposes of signaling. Time would be required not just to develop a credible audience cost, but also to actual marshal domestic public support around the potential conflict action. Reflecting back on the president's multiple audiences, while the president's speech may be intended to signal commitment to a foreign audience, it is also intended to develop a positive response within the domestic audience. If the president is seeking to promote the need for military escalation to his domestic public as well as to signal a willingness to commit to military action, then this is a pattern we'd be more likely to see in at least the month leading up to conflict, rather than simply the days leading up to it. Military engagements are substantial enterprises and they take some time to prepare. Similarly, it takes time to develop public support for major military action. Like any public opinion campaign, the effort to develop public support for a military action is likely to be carefully planned and executed over more than a couple of days. For example, George W. Bush's promotion of the Iraq War before its inception was the product of over a year's effort. Chief of Staff Andrew Card's comment in 2002 about the timing of the president's initiation of the Iraq War – that, “from a marketing point of view, you don't introduce new products in August” – highlighted the considerable lead time which presidents may intentionally allow in order to create support for the war (Miller 2002).

I returned to the Correlates of War MID database and selected all conflicts beginning in February 1982 or later where the US was a participant. Of these MIDs, I then identified all of the

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<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, this one case – in which there was neither an increase in the number of speeches nor heroic rhetoric – may actually have been mislabeled as a threat by Correlates of War coders. Conflict 2774 describes a situation in which an Iraqi aircraft sent a missile close to an American warship. Both sides, while on alert at the moment, appear to have quickly understood the event to be an accident. A spokesman for the Pentagon was reported as saying that the US “did not plan a protest to Iraq over the incident” (Halloran 1988).

conflicts in which one of the twenty-five states that I track acted as an adversary against the US. This gave me 76 total conflict cases to examine. I also recorded whether the US or its adversary acted as the “Side A” – or initiator – of each conflict. I expected to see an increase in signaling for conflicts in which the US acted as the “Side A” party. Since I expect the president to signal in situations where the US initiated the conflict, I hypothesize that the president’s use of heroic rhetoric will increase during the month prior to the conflict initiation month, relative to the entire year prior to the conflict initiation. Recognizing the president’s awareness of both domestic and international effects from his communications, this increase should reflect both the president’s effort to create domestic support for the upcoming conflict and his signaling of serious intent to the adversary state. Meanwhile, where the US did not initiate the conflict (was not Side A), I did not expect to see any signaling behavior. Out of my 76 cases, the US was the initiator in 37 cases and not the initiator in 39 cases.

For all cases, whether the US was Side A or not, I recorded the president’s average daily use of heroic rhetoric during both the month prior and the year prior to the month in which the US entered each conflict. For each case I then compared these two averages to determine whether the president’s use of heroic rhetoric increased or decreased in the month before each US conflict. Finally, I grouped the cases into US-initiated or adversary-initiated conflicts and then averaged the change in presidential heroic rhetoric for each case all together for each group.

Mean change in daily heroic rhetoric in month before conflict:		t	d.f	p-value, one-tailed test
US initiates	Adversary initiates			
0.025	-0.024	1.78	74	.039

Table 5.4

Table 5.4 shows the average change between presidential heroic rhetoric in the month prior to the onset of conflict relative to the year prior to the onset of conflict for each of the two conditions. The difference between these averages was significant at the  $p < .05$  level, one-tailed. Presidents show distinctly different patterns of use of heroic rhetoric around conflict depending on whether they initiated the conflict or whether they were the subject of another state’s attack. In general, my findings supported my hypothesis that presidents will often increase their use of heroic rhetoric in the month preceding their initiation of a conflict, relative to their overall use of heroic rhetoric during the year. It also pointed also to the fact that when presidents do *not* initiate a conflict they may use less than average amounts of heroic rhetoric in connection with their adversary. This suggests that presidents may be aware of the increased likelihood of conflict initiation during the days prior to an adversary’s attack and could be attempting to speak especially cautiously during that time.

Taking these two tests together, it seems that presidents do increase their use of heroic framing at moments where they would be expected to signal – in instances where they are effectively announcing a willingness to enter a military conflict. It seems likely that attentive foreign audiences would be aware of this and attend to the president’s increase in heroic framing as a signal that the US is genuinely prepared to enter a conflict. From the perspective of domestic observers, it also seems likely that they would have come to understand that the president’s use

of heroic framing may indicate that he is willing to lead the country into a war. Meanwhile, less attentive members of the public may simply experience the president's use of heroic framing as a persuasive argument, accepting his heroic imagery as offering legitimate considerations in weighing the decision of whether or not to support the US going to war.

### Does Heroic Framing Function to Reassure the Public?

Signaling operates on the assumption that presidents are always communicating to the international audience: both the decision to speak about a country and the decision to refrain from speaking about a country communicate information. By looking at how the president's use of heroic rhetoric operates as a form of signaling, I also imply that the president's decisions to use – or to not use – heroic rhetoric are similarly strategic forms of international communication. However, this assumption runs up against the fact that heroic rhetoric plays an important second role in presidential speech. When presidents use heroic framing as a form of ceremonial rhetoric, I theorize that presidents use this language specifically to help to reassure a threatened American public. This is an entirely different reason for using heroic framing and one which will lead the president to use this rhetorical technique when he is not intending to send international signals. Becoming aware of this second role for heroic rhetoric therefore improves our ability to understand its likely political consequences.

Speakers' use of heroic imagery at times of public stress has an ancient lineage. According to theories of classical rhetoric, the epideictic address was used in times of public mourning because it helped express public grief while simultaneously offering a comforting reflection on the group's high moral character (Stuckey 2006). With this in mind, I would expect the president to use more heroic framing in situations where the public would feel sorrow, feel threatened or otherwise in need of comfort from their chief representative – contexts that would suggest the use of epideictic address.

There are a number of specific instances that one could point to of moments when the public needs comfort. However, looking for responses to particular instances – such as Reagan's response to the Challenger disaster or George W. Bush's statements on the September 11 attacks – would only support my hypothesis for moments of extreme national stress.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, I would like instead to explore the presidential use of heroic framing in less extreme, more routine moments of ceremonial reassurance. To do that, I decided to look at speech which mentions the classical context for epideictic speech: presidential speech which references publicly-relevant death.

I looked specifically at the presidential use of two terms which I thought would be likely to evoke publicly-relevant death: memorial and "loss of life," a term which means "death" but,

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<sup>61</sup> Reagan's response to the Challenger disaster is explored in intriguing detail by Mary Stuckey (2006).



in its elegance, suggests an effort to soften the impact of the event.<sup>62</sup> I identified all speeches containing one of these two terms. For each year between 1981 and 2005, I then compared the average heroic rhetoric for presidential speeches containing one of these terms with the president's overall average use of heroic rhetoric for that year.

For all years, speeches in which the president mentioned the word “memorial” contained a higher average level of heroic rhetoric than the average speech for that year. (Figure 5.1.) The word “memorial” is strongly associated with the concept of eulogy since both concern ways of commemorating the death of a valuable group member. As expected, we can identify through this trend line that the ancient eulogistic rhetorical form – the epideictic address – has been carried forward in the form of heroic imagery during presidential speeches which reference the memorial.

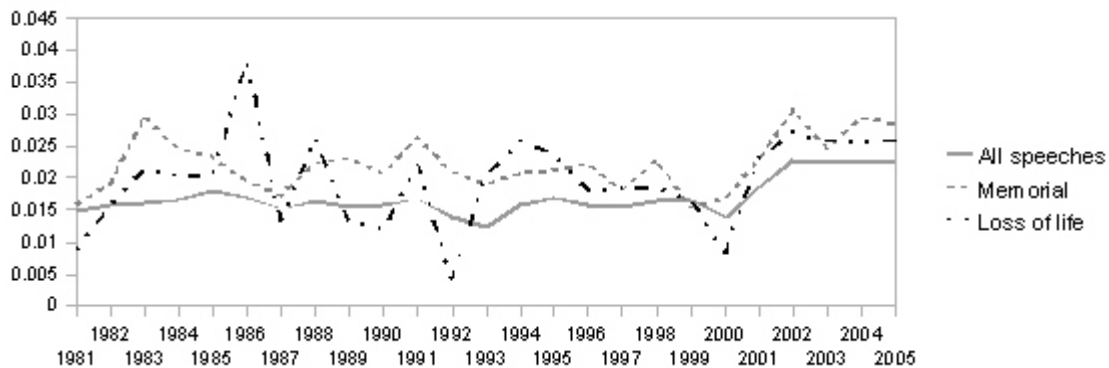


Figure 5.1

While speeches mentioning “loss of life” were somewhat more variable, there was still a strong average trend that presidents would use more heroic rhetoric in speeches using this phrase than they would in their average speech. Overall, it is easy to note that the presidential use of heroic rhetoric in speeches mentioning loss of life was much more variable than the presidential use of heroic rhetoric in speeches mentioning memorials. Much of that annual variability is probably due to the much more common use of the word “memorial” (n= 792) than “loss of life” (n=203). During the entire year of 1992, for example, George H.W. Bush used the term “loss of life” in just one speech. Moreover, in that particular speech, his use of the term “loss of life” referred to a legal possibility rather than a meaningful death and entire speech happened to be quite low in heroic rhetoric. Nonetheless, when we average the use of heroic rhetoric in these speeches over a set of years, the trend seems more clear. Heroic rhetoric averaged per sitting president (Table 5.5) suggests that when a president uses the word memorial or the term “loss of life,” he is likely to use more heroic rhetoric than average.

<sup>62</sup> I considered looking at speeches using the word “death” but the word “death” itself tends to bring up a large number of statements on abstract medical topics, rather than references to the kind of publicly-relevant death that I was seeking.

Increased Average Use of Heroic Rhetoric: Presidential Speeches about Death			
	In all speech	In speech mentioning "memorial"	In speech mentioning "loss of life"
Overall '81-'05	0.016	0.022	0.02
By president:			
Reagan	0.016	0.021	0.02
GHW Bush	0.016	0.023	0.013
Clinton	0.015	0.02	0.019
GW Bush	0.022	0.027	0.025

Table 5.5

Both the average speech referring to memorials and the average speech referring to loss of life contained more heroic rhetoric than the average speech for the entire 1981-2005 period. These findings are consistent with my hypothesis that presidents will use increase their use of heroic rhetoric when discussing publicly-relevant death. I theorize that presidents do this because they feel that it will reassure the public. However, whether presidents actually intend it to be reassuring and uplifting, or whether presidents do it solely in order to conform with certain expectations of ceremonial presidential behavior, it appears nonetheless to exist as a consistent pattern.

*A note on presidential rhetorical response to world disasters*

Now, while death represents one form of threat which requires a special rhetorical response, I thought that domestic and foreign natural disasters might represent another kind of threat to which presidents might respond. Large earthquakes, tsunamis, or hurricanes which occur suddenly and cause death or serious destruction are upsetting to hear about. This sense of horror, sorrow and identification with those affected by the disaster leads to a good opportunity for an official narrative interpretation of the event. In this case heroic framing would allow the president to name the victims, point out the emergency-response heroes and the villainous political officials who have interfered with rescue efforts for their own selfish reasons, and so on. However, after I compiled a database of all major natural and technological disasters occurring in my countries of interest during the period 1981 through 2005, I found that presidents mentioned only a very small proportion of the total list of disaster incidents.<sup>63</sup> I came to realize that a large number of contextual factors would influence whether or not the US public would know enough about the unmentioned events to even seek a presidential response. Some disasters never receive international coverage since some states do not permit the dissemination of news about major disasters to foreign media outlets. In other cases states are so far off the media agenda that even a major disaster might not rate them coverage.

Ultimately, I decided to perform a keyword search for disaster terms within presidential speech and to then evaluate the relative incidence of heroic rhetoric in speeches mentioning

<sup>63</sup> I compiled this information using data found at EM-DAT, the OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database: [www.emdat.net](http://www.emdat.net). (Université catholique de Louvain, Brussels, BE.)

disaster terms. I searched for presidential references to hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes and disasters, recorded the average use of heroic rhetoric in these speeches, and compared them to the overall, annual, and by-president average use of heroic rhetoric. I found relatively minimal differences between speeches which mentioned these terms and the average speech. This finding suggests that presidents either do not have regular rhetorical patterns around disasters as a larger class or that the keyword approach to identifying relevant speeches is insufficient to demonstrate a substantial difference in the use of heroic rhetoric for disaster-related speeches.

### Does Heroic Framing Increase the Risk of Misperception?

If presidential use of heroic rhetoric is positively correlated with signaling, and heroic rhetoric is also positively correlated with presidential efforts to reassure a threatened public, this creates a potential for unintended signaling. Presidents who reassure the public by using heroic rhetoric in connection with an adversarial country run the risk of signaling an interest in conflict with that country. This may be particularly true in the context of military accidents, which compound the problem of ambiguous presidential signaling by themselves being ambiguous events. Like all complex systems, military organizations sometimes experience accidents (Perrow 1999). However, since military organizations are presumed to use violence strategically, when military officers accidentally harm members of another country it is never altogether clear whether or not the harm was intentional. Because of that, military accidents have great potential to serve as conflict triggers. In this final section of this chapter, I will provide some illustrative examples of how heroic rhetoric can routinely function to exacerbate tensions during these critical moments.

Military accidents provide a classic stimulus for presidential heroic imagery. Unfortunately, the combination of qualities present in military accidents represent a misperception danger zone, with a greatly heightened likelihood of unintended signaling. The death of members of the military due to foreign action creates a situation where an upsetting accident requires the president to offer a heroically-framed response, yet where foreign audiences might be particularly concerned about the possibility of US threat and thus particularly attentive to presidential signaling.

Military accidents in which service members die create a perfect occasion for the use of heroic ceremonial speech. Reagan provided a prototypical example of this kind of speech in commemorating the 248 soldiers lost in a 1985 plane crash in Newfoundland, Canada:

Some people think of members of the military as only warriors, fierce in their martial expertise. But the men and women we mourn today were peacemakers. They were there to protect life and preserve a peace, to act as a force for stability and hope and trust. Their commitment was as strong as their purpose was pure. And they were proud. They had a rendezvous with destiny and a potential they never failed to meet. Their work was a perfect expression of the best of the Judeo-Christian tradition. They were the ones of whom Christ spoke when He said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Reagan 1985a).

When accidents occur between friendly states, there is a better likelihood that the accident will be taken at face value and that members of the other nation will not take the president's rhetoric personally. For example, in the plane crash mentioned above, while the majority of the official investigators believed that the accident was caused by ice – and was therefore a true accident – a minority of the investigative group believed that the crash resulted from explosions occurring within the plane (Filotas 1991). Since the accident happened in Canada, it was probably easier to accept the majority opinion, attribute the accident to ice, and stop the investigation than it would have been had the event occurred in a hostile state. A quick determination of blamelessness further insulated the US-Canada relationship from fallout from the incident.

Meanwhile, when accidents occur in the context of a hostile international relationship, these protections are not in place. Instead, while the president's heroic framing still enters into the national communication about the incident, negative attributions about the other state are likely to cause international audiences to take the president's rhetoric more seriously. It is interesting to observe that this outcome occurs not only in cases in which US citizens are harmed. Since it is also threatening for the US public to imagine that their own state has been responsible for the undeserved loss of life, if the US military accidentally harms civilians the same dynamic may come into effect.

One clear example of presidential use of heroic framing in response to a US-initiated military accident is Reagan's response to the 1988 shootdown of an Iranian passenger airplane by the USS Vincennes. All 290 civilians on board the Iranian plane were killed when the captain mistook it for a military fighter jet. Despite the fact that the US officer clearly acted in error in this incident and the US quickly resolved to pay reparations to the families of those who were killed, the president's speech retained a martial logic. In the days following the incident, Reagan's spokesman relayed the president's framing of the situation:

The President has reviewed U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf, where our military forces are protecting vital interests of the free world. He has expressed his complete satisfaction with the policy and reiterated his belief that the actions of the U.S.S. Vincennes on July 3 in the case of the Iranian airliner were justifiable defensive actions. At the same time, he remains personally saddened at the tragic death of the innocent victims of this accident and has already expressed his deep regret to their families.... The responsibility for this tragic incident, and for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of other innocent victims as a result of the Iran-Iraq war, lies with those who refuse to end the conflict. A particularly heavy burden of responsibility rests with the Government of Iran, which has refused for almost a year to accept and implement Security Council Resolution 598 while it continues unprovoked attacks on innocent neutral shipping and crews in the international waters of the Gulf (Fitzwater 1988).

Finally, even in cases where the accident was neither caused by nor directly affected US citizens, military accidents in the context of a hostile international relationship can still provoke substantial presidential heroic rhetoric which may possibly signal military intentions. The 1986 reactor meltdown at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant provoked substantial fears among the US public about the potential global spread of toxic radiation. In order to reassure the public that

he was aware of their fears, Reagan heroized the “[interdependent] modern industrial States” and demonized the reclusive Soviet Union, emphasizing the evil qualities of the Soviet response to a nuclear accident occurring on their own soil.

Seldom has the interdependence of modern industrial States been more evident than this past week. All Americans, indeed the entire world, sympathize with those affected by the tragedy at Chernobyl. We stand ready, as do many nations, to assist in any way we can. But the contrast between the leaders of free nations meeting at the summit to deal openly with common concerns and the Soviet Government, with its secrecy and stubborn refusal to inform the international community of the common danger from this disaster, is stark and clear. The Soviets' handling of this incident manifests a disregard for the legitimate concerns of people everywhere. A nuclear accident that results in contaminating a number of countries with radioactive material is not simply an internal matter. The Soviets owe the world an explanation. A full accounting of what happened at Chernobyl and what is happening now is the least the world community has a right to expect (Reagan 1986a).

Now, certainly any actual danger of global radiation poisoning was not going to be attenuated by Reagan’s rhetorical fireworks. However, in the context of this radio address Reagan’s vehemence offered US listeners a sense that their fear was being taken seriously. In villainizing the Soviet Union, he offered them a clear and familiar target for their concerns.

The president’s use of heroic rhetoric immediately following a threatening military accident makes sense from the perspective of the domestic audience, as they seek comfort from their leadership. However, it may result in the sending of an undesired hostile signal to a potential adversary who is particularly attending to the level of presidential heroic rhetoric. As suggested by the fact that I drew all three examples above from Reagan’s presidency, presidents who most frequently use heroic framing as a tool in their rhetorical arsenal seem most likely to find themselves in this particular bind. However, presidents who frequently use heroic framing may achieve other kinds of benefits which offset this disadvantage. Their communications, dressed out in heroic rhetoric, may provoke a more positive response from their domestic constituencies. Given the likely unpredictability of foreign response to presidential heroic rhetoric, domestic attention may be the more certain prize anyway.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I examined my hypotheses about presidential use of heroic framing in greater detail. By using country-level data I was able to look at the presidents use of heroic framing in the context of country-specific policy to discover that presidents use more heroic rhetoric when they mention certain countries in advance of greater foreign aid disbursements to those countries. That finding supported my earlier and more general observation that presidents appear to use heroic framing as a persuasive technique in connection with their priority policy areas. The fact that presidents use heroic framing in connection with their policy priorities supports the possibility that presidents use heroic framing to signal military intentions to other

countries, in line with the expectations of the rational war literature (Fearon 1994). I looked at this possibility in greater detail and found that presidents use more heroic rhetoric during times when other observers have classified the US as having issued a threat against another country. Presidents also tend to use greater than average heroic rhetoric in connection with a country before they initiate war with that country. These observations together suggest that presidential use of heroic framing does offer adversaries a signal of genuine presidential commitment to the issue of contention.

Meanwhile, I also examined specific hypotheses related to the notion that presidents will tend to use heroic framing in situations requiring a reassuring official response. I found that presidents use more heroic rhetoric than average when their speeches also contain the word “memorial” or the phrase “loss of life.” Although my hypothesis about the presidential use of heroic framing in connection with the average international disaster was not supported, I feel confident asserting that presidents do tend to use heroic rhetoric in connection with death and disaster which is already publicly salient.

Finally, I examined a potential conflict arising from these two motivations for presidential heroic framing. Military disasters present conditions which are rife for misperception by potential adversaries. They call for the president to heroically frame the upsetting public death, yet these speeches occur in the context of heightened foreign attention. I provided several examples of speech falling into this category to illustrate situations where ceremonial heroic framing might be especially likely to be perceived as inflammatory and intentionally provocative. Even though these speeches may have been intended for domestic consumption, the reality of international signaling increases the chances that these speeches will have unintended consequences.

Together, these hypotheses and findings offer a clearer picture of what might lead presidents to invoke heroic imagery in their speeches and what possible effects they might produce. Presidential heroic framing appears to be both reactive and proactive, a rhetorical technique which amplifies the symbolic and epic in everyday life for a range of purposes. As I develop a clearer picture of the presidential use of heroic framing, the question of whether these regular uses produce any regular effects becomes more interesting. In the next chapter, I will begin to examine the effectiveness of presidential heroic rhetoric by looking to see how it might function as a device of domestic persuasion.



## Chapter 6: Effects of Heroic Framing

To this point I have examined the conditions under which we might expect the president to increase his use of heroic framing. Given our improved understanding of those conditions, I will now start to examine whether the president achieves regular effects through his use of heroic framing. I have hypothesized that the president uses heroic framing under conditions in which we would expect he would seek to persuade, reassure, or signal intent. Because persuasion and reassurance are fundamentally individual-level experiences, it is challenging to assess whether presidential heroic framing plays a role in achieving these outcomes without public opinion surveys regularly tied to presidential speech events. Similarly, it is a challenge to determine whether presidential heroic framing regularly signals hostile intent to potential adversaries since foreign leaders would not necessarily make their observation of those signals public.

However, while these effects are prohibitively difficult to measure within the scope of this project, I am able to look at an important intervening effect that could express a lot about how and when the president's use of heroic framing might be most influential. In this chapter, I will look primarily at the media effects that the president can achieve through heroic framing. The degree of media attention the president is able to generate through his use of heroic framing provides a valuable proxy for my questions about the president's influence because the media conveys, amplifies, or muffles the president's message to almost all of his audiences.

As I believe that the president's influence on the quantity of media attention – rather than specific qualities of it – create the most critical effects, in this chapter I will test the degree to which presidential heroic framing increases media attention to the president's subjects of interest. This approach to understanding the influence of presidential speech is not novel. However, while other studies have sought to determine the relationship between presidential speech and media attention (most notably B. Dan Wood and Jeffery Peake 1998), my study provides an additional perspective by examining whether the president's use of heroic rhetoric strengthens his ability to affect media coverage. I will then go on to examine the three-way relationship between presidential heroic framing, media coverage, and Congressional attention to foreign policy subjects to determine whether presidential heroic framing has an independent effect on other political actors.

### Effects of Presidential Speech

As I shift my focus from looking at the causes of heroic framing to the particular media effects of presidential heroic framing, it is helpful to think about the pathways by which I expect media effects to occur. Communication effects like these depend on the existence of three things: a message, a message sender, and a message receiver (Schramm 1955). Variations in each of these three elements affect the power and kind of communication effect. In the case of this project, I am examining the president as message sender. The president is a particularly privileged message sender in that his communications are considered credible and important. I hypothesize that messages which are framed with heroic imagery will also be viewed as particularly important and persuasive because of the widespread cultural resonance of the heroic

narrative. Finally, I identify three relevant categories of message receivers which could affect the president's achievement of his policy priorities. If the domestic public receives an effectively persuasive message from the president, they will pressure their elected representatives to conform to the president's preferences: Kernell's "going public" effect. If domestic officials receive an effectively persuasive message from the president, they will support the policy that the president prefers. If relevant international audiences receive an effectively persuasive message from the president, they will be persuaded that he is genuinely committed to the policies he mentions.

Meanwhile, communication scholars observe that while the sender, message and receiver are essential elements of communication effects, it is also important to consider the channel by which the message is transmitted. Beyond the world of face-to-face communications, "media effects" describe systematic changes which occur when a sender conveys a message to receivers through some intermediary channel. Presidents do often speak directly to audiences, but the great majority of the president's audiences receive his messages by way of media reports. The effectiveness of the president's message relies on his success in achieving media effects.

Of the important media effects which I reviewed in Chapter 2, agenda-setting might be considered the best established and most fundamental. The theory of agenda-setting (McCombs and Shaw 1972) states that the more the news media focus on a particular subject, the more the public will perceive that subject to be an important one. This should be particularly true for issues like foreign policy, where the public generally has little personal, direct experience and is therefore more willing to accept informed journalistic opinion (Weaver et al 2004).<sup>64</sup> Since the president enjoys broad coverage of his major addresses – and is nearly assured to get some coverage of even minor speech opportunities – he is in a good position to affect the content of the news (Bennett 2005, Peake and Parks 2008). Because of this, the president has the potential to deliberately create a media agenda-setting effect in order to drive attention to his issues of interest.

Increased media attention to the president's preferred subjects is in and of itself a useful first step to achieving support (Cobb and Elder 1972). If the president wants to pursue a particular foreign policy, increasing the salience of the foreign policy issue is likely to benefit him politically. The president is especially powerful in the foreign policy domain, as I reviewed earlier, so if the public comes to identify a foreign policy issue as important the president's chances at passing a preferred program will benefit from the public sense that "something must be done." However, a successful agenda-setting effort also represents a critical first step on the way to the president's popularization of his preferred framing on this issue. When the president achieves control over the framing of a political issue, he holds a substantial advantage in the national discussion about that subject; by highlighting certain aspects of an issue and minimizing others, he can effectively stack the public's decision-making process in favor of his preferred outcome.

There are a number of factors affecting the likelihood that the president would be able to influence the public framing of an issue through coverage of his speech. As I reviewed above, media effects are the product of media actors, their decisions about what to focus on, and the

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<sup>64</sup> For a comprehensive review of scholarship on this point, see Baum and Potter (2008).

systems affecting the production of their texts. There are thus many different forms of influence on the media texts which produce media effects, including the systems of media ownership (Bourdieu 1999), the existing knowledge base of media consumers (Bartels 1996), and the preferences and norms of journalists (Bennett 1996). Because of these variations, media effects are not simply an “empty” channel which seamlessly transmit the president’s words directly to the audience. While major news media organizations do often choose to transmit the president’s messages, they sometimes chose not to. Media outlets may determine that the president’s message is insufficiently interesting or relevant to their consumers to warrant coverage. Alternatively, media outlets may choose to provide heavy coverage of the president’s message, amplifying it to a greater-than-normal degree by increasing their attention to his speech or its subject.

Beyond the media, if the president is successfully able to convey his message to the public through the channel of the major news media, then he may not only be able to have a persuasive effect on the public, but may also be in a position to indirectly affect the Congressional agenda. Congressional support for the president’s position on foreign policy issues is a critical element of the president’s success in attaining his foreign policy goals. While many scholars identify the president as the most important actor in US foreign policymaking (Peterson 1994), others point out that there are a number of areas of foreign policy in which Congress plays a more significant role, including foreign trade and non-crisis foreign policy matters (Peake 2001). The president undoubtedly pursues direct communication with key Congressional actors in order to achieve his foreign policy priorities. However, when Congress is recalcitrant, or when the president has a generally confrontational relationship with an opposition-led Congress, there may be more opportunity for him to go public with his policy advocacy and seek to pressure Congress through directly engaging public opinion (Kernell 1986).

Some scholars suggest that Congress may be less sensitive than other political institutions to outside pressures which would lead it to rapidly change its agenda, due to the considerable inertial force of the Congressional hearings schedule (Edwards and Wood 1999). However, the interplay of presidential, media and Congressional agendas may produce the kind of spiraling attention which produces agenda shifts over time, even if the responses are not immediate. Jeffery Peake’s (2001) study of reciprocal influences among the president, media and Congressional foreign policy agendas provides a key inspiration for my test of similar dynamics in this chapter.

### Reciprocal Effects on Presidential Speech

Considering the multi-directional interplay between presidential, congressional and media agendas also prompts the thought that while the media cover presidential speech, media coverage is itself likely to affect presidential speech. Media scholars have studied the substantial independent power of the media to affect political agendas (Auerbach and Bloch-Elkon 2005, Walgrave and Van Aelst 2006, Davis 2007). One major reason media coverage affects presidential agendas is because news coverage conveys a ready measure of what current events

are likely to interest the domestic public. Once apprised of the issues that interest the public, the president is likely to respond by speaking publicly about those issues.

Meanwhile, though news coverage provides a way for the president to assess what issues are most interesting to the public, it can also be hard to disentangle the direct effects of world events on presidential speech from effects stemming from the media's coverage of those events. When the US news media report on a nuclear test in Pyongyang, for instance, this report does three separate things: it marks the occurrence of and happens concurrently with an important event (the nuclear test), it conveys a sense of the event's relevance to the US media audience, *and* it indirectly conveys to the president that the US public is likely to be concerned about this new development. The president may increase his attention to the subject of this nuclear test either because he is directly concerned about the event or because he is concerned about the public effects of the media report on the test. It's hard to know whether the president is responding mainly to the event or to existing media coverage of the event, since either way, the increase in news media attention would precede presidential attention. Because of this tight relationship, the news media variables in my study effectively include the effects of major world events as well as the media effects resulting specifically from the coverage.

Because of my awareness of this complication in the heart of my media attention variable, I gave the possibility of including a separate variable for world events some thought. Other studies of presidential agenda-setting (e.g., Wood and Peake 1998) have included the category of major world events as a separate variable to consider alongside presidential speech and media coverage. However, since these events variable are ultimately based not on some exogenous definition of events but on the media coverage of them, I am unconvinced that media and general events variables can be separated sufficiently to be meaningful.<sup>65</sup>

In the act of transmitting information about major world events, the news media both record the event and magnify its public significance by informing news consumers about something they wouldn't have known about otherwise. In that sense, news media both observe and partially create major world events. The reality of the mutual constitution of "events" and "news" became particularly clear for the purposes of my project when I briefly examined the relationship between presidential speech and major natural disasters (as described above in chapter 5.) Many major natural disasters, in which large numbers of people lost their lives and homes, do not receive international news coverage for a variety of political and geographical reasons. These events are the proverbial trees falling in the forest with no one there to hear them. While they are unquestionably "major events" in the sense that they had a serious effect on a large number of people, they do not clearly constitute major events for the US, since most people wouldn't know about them occurring. Events are publicly meaningful when they meet a certain threshold of media attention, rendering them, unavoidably, a mutual product of media attention and a physical or social event.

Beyond the effects of media (and events) on presidential attention, it is also possible that Congressional attention affects the frequency and manner in which the president speaks about

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<sup>65</sup> For example, Wood and Peake (1998) constructed their events variable using the very interesting PANDA database, which is an artificial intelligence system that parses Reuters stories in order to produce its database of world events.

different foreign policy issues. Recent work on the significance of symbolic agendas (Walgrave and Van Aelst 2004, 2006) suggests that Congressional agendas may particularly affect presidential speech when the president does not wish to adopt Congressional agenda items as political priorities. Walgrave and Van Aelst note that many of the president's speeches do not correspond to substantive political action; instead, the president may often make powerful speeches about a subject that the public finds important in order to suggest that he's doing something about it. Similarly, it seems likely that if the president wished to respond to Congressional pressure about a foreign policy subject he felt was not a priority, he might do so with a symbolic speech on the subject. If this is the case, it's possible that presidential use of heroic framing will respond to Congressional agendas, as well as or instead of the other way around. As yet another level of integration, it may be useful to consider that congressional attention to foreign policy subjects would also be affected both by major world events and by media coverage of world events, though perhaps to a lesser extent than the president would be.

In sum, given the multiple potential meanings of presidential speech, media coverage, and Congressional attention, there are good reasons to expect to find strong effects moving in all directions between variables measuring these three phenomena. It is likely to be important to the president that the media covers his speeches and his subjects of interest as much as possible. The effectiveness of public presidential speech depends on the effectiveness with which it is transmitted. Because media outlets both facilitate and limit the degree to which the president can communicate his message to an audience, media attention serves as the first indicator that the president is successfully achieving a persuasive effect from his speeches. At the same time, both the president's decision to speak about a subject and his selection of a rhetorical technique like heroic framing may represent a response to real world, media, or political dynamics.

### Testing the Relationships

Research into the effects of presidential speech on media coverage has produced mixed results. Both Wood and Peake (1998) and Edwards and Wood (1999) found no significant effect from presidential speech on media in their tests of foreign policy agenda-setting hypotheses. Peake (2001), meanwhile, found a significant effect from presidential speech in all four of his tests of the effects of presidential foreign policy speech on media coverage. Now, while these findings are not strictly comparable because each study examines the speech and media coverage of a different set of foreign policy subjects, they do give a sense of the still-wide range of answers to the question of whether the president's speech independently affects the media agenda.<sup>66</sup> Taking off from their line of inquiry, I will first perform a set of Granger tests to see whether presidential speech or heroic rhetoric predicts significant changes in media coverage and then graph the relationships of each variable with the others over time by "shocking" one variable to see how the others react.

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<sup>66</sup> Further complicating comparisons, all three of these studies also looked at "issue areas" rather than specific countries, as I do, and all three examined only the 11-year time period between 1984 and 1995.



My basic interest lies in discovering whether the president's use of heroic framing improves the chances that media outlets will cover his subjects of interest to a greater than average extent. To do this, I will compare the effects of the president simply mentioning a country with the effects of presidential speeches weighted for their inclusion of heroic rhetoric. More closely examining the effects of heroic rhetoric, I will compare the effects of presidential speeches low in heroic rhetoric with the effects of presidential speeches high in heroic rhetoric. Once I have examined the effect of presidential speech and use of heroic framing on media outcomes, I will then look to discover more about the three-way relationship between the president's heroic framing, media coverage, and Congressional attention to foreign policy issues.

These tests will then allow me to look for reciprocal effects of media and Congressional attention to subjects on the president's speech and use of heroic framing. Regardless of whether presidents are responding to the events reported in the news or to the increase in news attention *per se*, it will be interesting to determine whether they respond to increases in attention to foreign policy subjects with an increase in heroic framing. If I identify heroic framing as a way to comfort a threatened public, then news reports conveying potentially threatening news about foreign events might lead to an increase in heroic framing in connection with the subjects of concern. Similarly, does increased Congressional attention to a foreign policy subject lead to an increase in the president's use of heroic framing in connection with that subject? The effects of Congressional attention on presidential speech, if they exist, might operate under a similar logic.

## Methodological Approach

The first question I sought to answer was whether the president's use of heroic framing in a speech about a foreign policy subject increased the number of news stories published about that subject. In short, I am looking to find out whether the specific language which the president uses plays a role in his ability to increase media coverage. In order to test this, I compared the relationship between presidential speeches and the frequency of news stories published about that subject with the relationship between presidential speeches containing substantial heroic rhetoric and the frequency of news stories about that subject.

While this may seem like a reasonably simple test to perform, it is complicated by the fact that my sample does not satisfy the requirement for basic OLS regression that samples be random and independent. The observations I use in my analysis are not independent since each observation is, to a greater or lesser extent, dependent on the observations which precede it. Observations existing in a time-dependent relationship like this are known as a time-series. Each of my individual variables – presidential speeches, presidential use of heroic rhetoric, media coverage and Congressional attention – exists in a time-dependent relationship to itself and thus constitutes an individual time-series. Time series analysis is the field of statistical inquiry which seeks to determine how much of each observation can be attributed to the effect of earlier observations. Rather than viewing observations as independent events, time series analyses model them as cumulative events, made up partly of a new or unique elements and partly of elements persisting from previous moments. Moreover, the question of time-dependence is one to address both for each individual variable and in relationships variables have to one another.



While this is all more complicated than basic OLS regression, the concept of time-series analysis is particularly congenial to explore in the context of rhetoric. A persuasive argument which originates at one moment and becomes increasingly powerful in public debate over the course of a period of time illustrates the time-dependent nature of rhetorical effects. The first time a speaker advances a particular issue frame for a specific issue, it may make up only a small part of the way that she speaks about that issue. However, as she becomes more and more convinced of the effectiveness of her framing, she begins to use the frame with greater consistency. Soon, whenever the speaker mentions the issue, she always invokes the now-popular frame. This change in her pattern of rhetoric is not random. It exists in a time-dependent trajectory, where the speaker's earlier uses of a frame increase the likelihood that she will use it again in the future.

Similarly, it is easy to consider how a single actor's rhetoric could interact in a time-dependent way with other time-dependent variables. When the speaker advances her framing on a specific issue, other actors pay attention to her speech. Media reports on her speech and describes her issue framing favorably. Reading those stories, other speakers decide to adopt the frame and it becomes a larger and larger part of the way that an issue is described in the media. While each actor's use of the issue frame thus represents an individual time-series which can be modeled over a time period, the relationship between these time-series is also time-dependent: the spiraling increase in popularity of this hypothetical frame depends on the increasing positive relationship between our observed actors with regard to this issue frame.

In addition to being time-dependent, the example I used above demonstrates the bi-directional relationships that it might be appropriate to try to model among variables over time. While a speaker's decision to speak about an issue may lead a journalist to write about that issue, for example, an increase in media coverage about a particular issue may lead the speaker to speak more frequently about that issue as a result of her perception that the public has become more interested in it. The existence of this kind of endogeneity may make it difficult to even tell which variable provided the original cause for the interactive effects cascade. The Granger approach (Granger 1969) allows scholars to draw causal inferences from time-series which feature some endogeneity (Bartels 1996, Wood and Peake 1998, Soroka 2002, Yanovitsky 2002, Wallsten 2009).

The Granger method is a form of bivariate regression model which involves regressing one variable (Y) both on lagged values of itself as well as the lagged values of a second variable (X). An analyst can then conduct hypothesis tests by comparing the significance of blocks of lags of Y alone against the significance of the combined lags of X and Y. If, when controlling for all past values of Y, including X still significantly improves the model's ability to predict Y, then the analyst can determine that X “Granger caused” Y.<sup>67</sup> Asserting that X “Granger caused” Y is a distinctly different kind of assertion than asserting that X caused Y. “Granger causation” refers to temporal precedence, rather than the strength of the effect of X on Y (or vice versa.) For that reason, following an assessment of Granger causality analysts will often then conduct a test

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<sup>67</sup> Stated more formally, a finding of Granger causality means that “variable X causes another variable Y, if by incorporating the past history of X one can improve a prediction of Y over a prediction of Y based solely on the history of Y alone” (Freedman, 1983; 328).

which can show the strength of the effect of X on Y. As first popularized in the media effects literature by Wood and Peake (1998), this can be accomplished through “shocking” a variable by simulating a temporary one-unit increase in X and then showing how this change affects Y over time, effectively demonstrating the moving average response in Y to a change in X.

### Measurement of Major Variables

In order to look at the interaction of presidential use of heroic rhetoric with media coverage, I would ideally be able to compare what happens after (or before) the president uses less heroic rhetoric in his speeches with what happens after (or before) he uses more heroic rhetoric in his speeches. However, since I am looking at a very long time period, with frequent stretches in which the president makes no speeches at all about the countries I follow, the effects of presidential speech on media that I identify are quite subtle. Diluting the speech variables by halving them reduces the power of those variables even further. Because of this, when I divide the presidential speech variable – even just into two variables tracking less- and more-heroic speeches – I am left me with no significant results in Granger tests. Thus, in order to look at overall effects, I first compare the effects of a simple count of presidential speeches and with a count of speeches weighted by the presidents’ use of heroic rhetoric on media coverage. I then drill down to look at effects involving lesser and greater amounts of heroic rhetoric as a second stage.

The construction of my speech and rhetoric variables was straightforward and followed the method I have used throughout this dissertation. As before, I decided to look at individual countries as subjects of foreign policy speech. I used the data I had gathered on the twenty-five countries most frequently mentioned by the president between 1981 and 2005. To measure presidential speeches on each country, I collected presidential speeches<sup>68</sup> and determined the weekly average number of speeches per day in which the president mentioned each country. To measure presidential use of heroic framing in connection with each country, I recorded the weekly average of the president’s daily use of heroic rhetoric. Speech that contained no heroic rhetoric counted as 0, speeches in which more than .5% but less than 2% of the words could be found in the heroic rhetoric dictionary counted as 1, and speeches in which 2% or more of the words were heroic rhetoric counted as 2. In the second stage of analysis when I investigated the president’s specific use of heroic rhetoric, I constructed separate counts of “low heroic rhetoric” speeches and “high heroic rhetoric” speeches to look at the effects of these separate variables on media coverage, and the effects of media coverage on them. “Low heroic rhetoric” speeches were all speeches in which fewer than 2% of the president’s words came from my heroic rhetoric dictionary. “High heroic rhetoric” speeches were all speeches in which 2% or more of the president’s words came from my heroic rhetoric dictionary. I then recorded the weekly average of speeches high (or low) heroic rhetoric delivered by the president each day.

To measure media attention to foreign policy subjects, I used the New York Times archive available in the LexisNexis Academic database since this was the only major media

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<sup>68</sup> Excluding certain categories of texts, as outlined in Chapter 3.

outlet to have articles from the entire period of my study in electronic form. I recorded the weekly average number of stories per day in which each country was mentioned in the headline or lead paragraphs (using the “Hlead” search function in LexisNexis.) To be sure that my variables did not need to be transformed for use in time-series analysis, I then verified that they were stationary using the Augmented Dickey-Fuller unit-root test.

## Granger Tests

In order to determine whether my measure of presidential speeches or my measure of presidential heroic rhetoric was a better predictor of media coverage in my twenty-five country cases over the 1981-2005 period, I used Granger tests to see whether either of these measures significantly influenced media coverage. Granger tests are a simple form of time-series analysis which account for autoregression (the lasting effects of previous time-periods) by incorporating a number of lags into each equation. While some studies of agenda setting simply adopt the assumption that a set, minimal number of lags is functionally sufficient (Yanovitsky 2002), it is more appropriate to determine the appropriate number of lags through testing to see how much each additional lag improves the fit of the estimated model (Sims 1980). The VARselect function of the VARS package for R (Pfaff 2008) allows its user to use up to four methods of identifying the optimal lag-order for a vector auto-regression or Granger test: Aikake’s information criteria (AIC), Hannan and Quinn’s information criteria, Schwartz’s information criteria or final prediction error. For each of my equations, I used the lag order suggested by AIC, except for a couple of exceptions noted in my tables where I chose one of the more conservative measures.

As can be seen in Table 6.1, the great majority of the two-way relationships (74%) between presidential speech, heroic rhetoric, and New York Times (NYT) article frequencies were significant.<sup>69</sup> This was particularly the case for the effect of NYT articles on the frequency of presidential speeches and presidential use of heroic rhetoric. In twenty out of twenty-five cases, an increase in NYT articles about a country Granger-caused an increase in presidential speech about that country, while in twenty-one out of twenty-five cases an increase in NYT articles about a country Granger-caused an increase in the president’s use of heroic rhetoric in connection with that country. The finding of a significant causal effect of media attention on presidential attention falls in line with similar studies of presidential agenda-setting (Wood and Peake 1998, Edwards and Wood 1999, Peake 2001).

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<sup>69</sup> For this study, I did not look at the relationship between presidential speech and heroic rhetoric as this chapter is devoted to effects on media and Congress rather than the dynamics of presidential speech itself.

Dependent Variable	Coefficient Block	Afghanistan	Angola	Canada	China	Colombia	Cuba	El Salvador	Germany	Grenada	Haiti	Iran	Iraq	Israel
NYT	Speech	0.426	2.169	1.549	<b>8.227</b>	<b>1.972</b>	1.062	2.287	3.024	0.155	2.63	1.005	1.55	1.516
	significance	(0.831)	(0.014)	(0.126)	(0)	(0.056)	(0.364)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.988)	(0)	(0.452)	(0.158)	(0.182)
	Heroic Rhetoric	0.818	2.281	1.414	4.942	2.019	1.587	2.209	3.233	0.295	2.862	0.695	2.47	1.207
	significance	(0.599)	(0.009)	(0.177)	(0)	0.073	(0.114)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.939)	(0)	(0.827)	(0.016)	(0.3)
Speech	NYT	6.175	2.937	0.974	<b>5.209</b>	<b>5.296</b>	0.473	<b>6.026</b>	<b>1.789</b>	<b>6.845</b>	<b>7.136</b>	<b>2.876</b>	<b>6.764</b>	<b>2.011</b>
	significance	(0)	(0.001)	(0.46)	(0)	(0)	(0.701)	(0)	(0.086)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0.075)
Heroic Rhetoric	NYT	<b>11.268</b>	<b>2.72</b>	1.343	<b>5.013</b>	<b>7.529</b>	1.151	4.971	1.618	<b>9.053</b>	<b>5.839</b>	<b>2.46</b>	<b>12.78</b>	<b>2.543</b>
	significance	(0)	(0.002)	(0.21)	(0)	(0)	(0.323)	(0)	(0.126)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0.019)
Dependent Variable	Coefficient Block	Lebanon	Libya	Mexico	Nicaragua	North Korea	Pakistan	Panama	Poland	South Africa	Soviet Union	Sudan	Yugoslavia	
NYT	Speech	0.633	<b>2.282</b>	<b>1.853</b>	<b>3.038</b>	<b>1.717</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>2.076</b>	1.545	<b>2.27</b>	2.137	<b>5.022</b>	<b>2.262</b>	
	significance	(0.750)	(0.001)	(0.055)	(0)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0)	(0.137)	(0.046)	0.118	(0)	(0)	
	Heroic Rhetoric	0.404	<b>2.341</b>	<b>1.687</b>	<b>2.906</b>	<b>1.578</b>	<b>2.702</b>	<b>1.441</b>	1.466	<b>2.066</b>	<b>3.157</b>	<b>3.233</b>	<b>3.041</b>	
	significance	(0.919)	(0.001)	(0.087)	(0)	(0.015)	(0.003)	(0.052)	(0.165)	(0.083)	(0.043)	0.001	(0)	
Speech	NYT	<b>7.123</b>	<b>1.847</b>	1.119	<b>2.678</b>	<b>1.92</b>	1.307	<b>6.457</b>	<b>5.874</b>	1.669	<b>20.617</b>	<b>7.491</b>	<b>3.607</b>	
	significance	(0)	(0.011)	(0.346)	(0)	(0.001)	(0.222)	(0)	(0)	(0.139)	(0)	(0)	(0)	
Heroic Rhetoric	NYT	<b>8.311</b>	<b>1.8</b>	0.777	<b>2.824</b>	<b>2.057</b>	1.252	<b>6.109</b>	<b>4.245</b>	<b>3.129</b>	<b>29.873</b>	<b>7.339</b>	<b>4.192</b>	
	significance	(0)	(0.015)	(0.638)	(0)	(0)	(0.253)	(0)	(0)	(0.014)	(0)	(0)	(0)	

0 = < 0.001, bolded results are significant at less than 0.10

Table 6.1: Granger Tests, Reports of F-Tests and their Significance

There were several countries for which NYT article frequency did not affect presidential speech or presidential use of heroic rhetoric. NYT articles about Canada, Cuba, Mexico, and Pakistan did not produce a regular change in the number of presidential speeches or use of heroic rhetoric. (Articles about Iraq and South Africa did bear a significant relationship to the president's use of heroic rhetoric, but not the frequency of presidential speeches.) The fact that NYT articles about Canada and Mexico do not result in a change in presidential speech seems explicable on the grounds that frequent interactions between the US, Mexico and Canada result in more opportunities for stories which do not necessarily implicate national-level policy. While the lack of relationship between NYT article frequency and presidential speech and rhetoric about Cuba may initially seem surprising, this relationship was likely to have been affected by the intense media attention to the Elian Gonzales affair, an event which nearly doubled the

average frequency of NYT articles about Cuba throughout 2000. While President Bill Clinton did make a couple of speeches mentioning the issue during the period of media attention, this increase in presidential attention was nowhere near the proportions of the increase in media interest.<sup>70</sup> Pakistan, meanwhile, appears to represent an anomaly to the pattern without a clear explanation. Pakistan witnessed substantial political turmoil during the 1990s which was covered in the New York Times but was also the subject of relatively little presidential comment.<sup>71</sup>

While the effect of NYT articles on presidential speech and rhetoric is clear and expected (again, especially so because my NYT variable includes the effect of events), I also uncovered a fairly strong influence of presidential speech and rhetoric on NYT coverage. According to Granger tests, presidential speech explained some of the variation in the NYT coverage of fifteen out of twenty-five countries. Presidential use of heroic rhetoric, meanwhile, explained some of the variation in the NYT's coverage of seventeen out of twenty-five countries. This finding about the impact of presidential speech is different from what was found by Wood and Peake (1998) and Edwards and Wood (1999). However, it is similar to what was found by Peake (2001). Jeffery Peake's 2001 study sought specifically to test the effects of presidential speech on less salient foreign policy topics. Peake demonstrated that while news media may develop their own patterns of coverage around highly salient foreign policy subjects, presidents may have more latitude to affect coverage of somewhat less-salient foreign policy subjects. Over the course of twenty-five years, every country in my study had periods of greater and lesser salience, so this may have tipped the balance in favor of greater overall presidential influence on media agendas.

Nonetheless, the generally greater effect of presidential attention on less salient foreign policy subjects which was observed by Peake (2001) is still clearly present in my findings. Dividing the twenty-five countries in two – the twelve less-salient during my time period and the thirteen more salient during my time period – I find that presidential speech Granger-caused NYT coverage in 83 percent of the less-salient countries, while it Granger-caused NYT coverage in 42 percent of the more-salient countries.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> The Elian Gonzales affair concerned the immigration status of a young Cuban boy who was brought to Miami to live with relatives after his mother died in their attempt to reach the US. Gonzales' father had remained in Cuba and sought his son's return; the boy's relatives in Miami insisted that he be allowed to stay with them. US immigration officials determined that the boy should be returned to Cuba, which resulted in an armed standoff with the family in Miami.

<sup>71</sup> A telling exchange from June 14, 1991: "Q. Mr. President, there was a report this morning that Iran has a nuclear weapons program that's being aided by Pakistan. Do you know anything about that?"

The President. Haven't seen such a report and I think I'd know about it -- oh, Iran. I thought you said Iraq.

Q. Iran.

The President. Still don't know about it. But we'll take a look at that."

<sup>72</sup> For the purposes of checking Peake's hypothesis, I eliminated Poland in order to split the total population of countries evenly into two groups. Had I included it, Poland would have

LESS SALIENT COUNTRIES	Approximate Total Number of NYT stories	Significant Presidential Speech?	MORE SALIENT COUNTRIES	Approximate Total Number of NYT stories	Significant Presidential Speech?
Grenada	963	0	Afghanistan	8321	0
Sudan	1700	1	South Africa	10015	1
Angola	1771	1	Yugoslavia	11430	1
Panama	2727	1	Lebanon	12139	0
Haiti	3391	1	Iran	12849	0
North Korea	3440	1	Mexico	16198	1
Libya	3679	1	Canada	18551	0
Colombia	3904	1	Germany	20748	1
El Salvador	4829	1	China	23457	1
Nicaragua	5745	1	Iraq	25713	0
Pakistan	6150	1	Israel	36325	0
Cuba	7067	0	Soviet Union	56368	0

Table 6.2: Significant Effects of Presidential Speech on NYT Coverage, Ranked by Saliency

The determinative effect of saliency on presidential agenda-setting power is less true when considering presidential use of heroic rhetoric, meanwhile. The president's use of heroic rhetoric Granger-caused a change in NYT coverage in 83 percent of the less-salient countries but it Granger-caused a change in NYT coverage in 58 percent of the more-salient countries. The president's use of heroic rhetoric allowed him to achieve a greater agenda-setting effect in the harder-to-affect category of more-salient countries.

LESS SALIENT COUNTRIES	Approximate Total Number of NYT stories	Significant Presidential HR?	MORE SALIENT COUNTRIES	Approximate Total Number of NYT stories	Significant Presidential HR?
Grenada	963	0	Afghanistan	8321	0
Sudan	1700	1	South Africa	10015	1
Angola	1771	1	Yugoslavia	11430	1
Panama	2727	1	Lebanon	12139	0
Haiti	3391	1	Iran	12849	0
North Korea	3440	1	Mexico	16198	1
Libya	3679	1	Canada	18551	0
Colombia	3904	1	Germany	20748	1
El Salvador	4829	1	China	23457	1
Nicaragua	5745	1	Iraq	25713	1
Pakistan	6150	1	Israel	36325	0
Cuba	7067	0	Soviet Union	56368	1

Table 6.3: Significant Effects of Heroic Rhetoric on NYT Coverage, Ranked by Saliency

Overall, Granger tests demonstrate that significant relationships exist between NYT coverage of foreign policy subjects and both presidential speech and the presidential use of heroic rhetoric. Presidential speech and presidential use of heroic rhetoric are both likely to have a significant, Granger-causal effect on NYT coverage. NYT coverage is also likely to have a significant, Granger-causal effect on presidential speech and presidential use of heroic rhetoric.

been placed into the "less-salient" NYT group and strengthened my finding, since presidential speech has a significant effect on the frequency of NYT articles about Poland.



Overall, however, heroic rhetoric variables are slightly more likely to bear a significant relation to NYT coverage. Presidential speech bore a significant relationship to NYT coverage in 35 out of 50 cases (25 cases where presidential speech was the independent variable and NYT coverage the dependent variable, plus 25 cases where NYT coverage was the independent variable and presidential speech the dependent variable), while heroic rhetoric bore a significant relationship to NYT coverage in 37 out of 50 cases. Presidential use of heroic rhetoric was also more likely to Granger-cause NYT coverage than was presidential speech when the subjects of media attention were already highly salient.

### Vector Autoregression and Impulse-Response

While bivariate Granger tests can reveal the existence of a significant relationship, they don't reveal the magnitude or direction of the effect resulting from those relationships. It is therefore necessary to use a separate test to examine and compare the substantive effects of each relationship. Vector autoregression (VAR) and structural equation modeling are two common approaches to modeling relationships between time-dependent variables. However, the VAR, which is a multivariate extension of the Granger test, is the more appropriate choice when the analyst does not have a strong rationale for restricting the parameters of a structural equation. Given the novelty of my project I did not have sufficient theoretical grounds for specifying the structural equation and thus chose to use the VAR. Because of the high levels of colinearity in the VAR equations, rather than comparing coefficients each VAR is evaluated by plotting out the estimated effects of a "shock" to a single variable on one or more of the other variables in the equation (Wood and Peake 1998). Using the VAR and IRF ("impulse response function") functions of the VARS package for R, I performed VARs and then IRFs on each set of relationships, plotting a one-magnitude shock to each variable in each VAR. The IRFs are useful because they allow us to visualize how a "shock" – an increase of one unit in each variable – would be likely to affect other individual variables, both in valence and magnitude, after taking into account the effects from all variables in the equation over the specified number of lags. The particular IRF program I used also includes a confidence interval based on a 100-run bootstrapping. By including this confidence interval, we can visualize the significance as well as the magnitude and valence of each variable's effect.

Because IRFs are visual rather than numerical results, their interpretation can be somewhat subjective. The subjectivity of visual interpretation is not that obvious when one compares the plots of shocks from very different variables, as is the case for the previous presidential agenda-setting literature I have cited. However, it becomes more so when the variables being compared are not as different. Furthermore, when one is comparing four or five graphs by eye it is not as necessary to formalize the method of comparison as it is when one is comparing a larger number of graphs.

In my own project, where I compare the performance of two distinct but closely related variables (presidential speech and presidential use of heroic rhetoric) over dozens of graphs, I had to develop a procedure for consistently comparing IRFs. I ended up using a combination of observation of the mean result (the plotted line) and the significance of the result (the confidence

intervals) to determine whether one IRF revealed a stronger effect than another. When comparing two results, I ended up producing an interpretation that was one of four outcomes: an observation that the first out of two IRFs revealed a stronger effect, an observation that the second out of two IRFs revealed a stronger effect, an observation that the two IRFs revealed effects of a similar magnitude, or an observation that neither IRF revealed a significant effect. However, given that I acknowledge that this method of interpretation is subjective, I have included all of the IRFs I conducted for this chapter as Appendix E; the reader is invited to examine them in order to evaluate my interpretations.

Overall, reviewing the graphs (once more, as can be found in Appendix E), I was first struck that the effects of presidential speech and heroic rhetoric on NYT article frequency are fairly small. In the cases of maximal speech effect (Nicaragua, China, the former Yugoslavia), one presidential speech or instance of heroic rhetoric averaged an increase of less than a third of a single NYT story. Given the president's power and national visibility, this seems like a relatively small effect. However, this may be accounted for somewhat by the length of time over which these effects have been averaged out. Each of the countries I examined went through periods of greater and lesser attention over the 1981-2005 period, but the presidents continued to speak about all of them, albeit infrequently, during almost every one of those years. The relative importance of the country, as well as the actual way in which these countries were mentioned by the president, contributed to many presidential speeches having no media effect at all, while a small number of others had a much larger effect.<sup>73</sup>

While the numbers are smaller, the predictive power of NYT article frequency on presidential speech and presidential rhetoric seems more impressive. At their maximal average effect (as in the case of Afghanistan or Haiti), 20 to 25 NYT articles about a country predicts a presidential speech or the use of some heroic rhetoric in connection with that country. Given the many tens of thousands of stories published in the NYT each year, that is a reasonably strong effect. Again, though, since my NYT variable includes both the power of media attention and the power of events themselves, these findings should not be interpreted to attribute change in presidential speech agendas to the power of media attention alone: if the NYT dramatically increases the number of articles it publishes about a country, there is a good chance that an exogenous world event worthy of presidential attention motivated that increase.

These tests therefore reveal that my presidential speech and rhetoric variables have a frequently positive, if minor, effect on media attention and that my NYT variable has a more frequently significant and robust effect on presidential speech and rhetoric. However, what particularly interests me for the purposes of this project is the relative relationships between presidential speech and presidential use of heroic rhetoric and NYT frequencies. With regard to

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<sup>73</sup> Looking at the presidential speeches substantiates this view. Presidents frequently mention lists of countries in a region, or mention a country in reference to a historical US action, without necessarily intending to change national policy in connection with the mentioned countries. Countries mentioned in this way seem unlikely to have any media effect and work to push the average presidential speech effect closer to zero.

this question, I found that presidential speech and presidential use of heroic rhetoric were approximately equally likely to predict an increase in the number of NYT stories.<sup>74</sup>

	Speech more likely than heroic rhetoric to predict increase in NYT articles	Heroic rhetoric more likely than speech to predict increase in NYT articles	Speech and heroic rhetoric equally likely to predict increase in NYT articles
Afghanistan	0	1	0
Angola	0	0	1
Canada	1	0	0
China	1	0	0
Colombia	0	0	1
Cuba	0	0	1
El Salvador	0	0	1
Germany	0	1	0
Haiti	0	0	1
Iran	0	0	1
Iraq	0	0	1
Israel	0	0	1
Lebanon	1	0	0
Libya	0	0	1
Mexico	1	0	0
Nicaragua	0	0	1
North Korea	1	0	0
Pakistan	0	1	0
Panama	1	0	0
Poland	1	0	0
South Africa	0	1	0
Soviet	0	1	0
Sudan	0	0	1
Yugoslavia/Bosnia	0	1	0
TOTAL:	7	6	11

Table 6.4: Comparing Strength of Speech and Heroic Rhetoric Effects on NYT Coverage

For each country (the rows in Table 6.4), I compared the IRF demonstrating the effect of presidential speech frequency on NYT articles with the IRF demonstrating the effect of presidential heroic rhetoric on NYT articles. I determined whether speech had a greater effect than heroic rhetoric on NYT article frequency, heroic rhetoric had a greater effect than speech on NYT article frequency, or whether the two variables had a similar effect on NYT article frequency. The results reported in Table 4 would suggest that, in general, a variable monitoring changes in presidential heroic rhetoric does not regularly do better than an unadorned accounting of presidential speech when predicting presidential media agenda-setting over a long period of

<sup>74</sup> As opposed to the Granger tests, the VAR identified some small but significant effect from either presidential speech or presidential use of heroic rhetoric on NYT coverage for every country but Grenada. I therefore excluded Grenada from this section of my analysis.

time. About a quarter of the time, variations in the president’s use of heroic rhetoric in connection with countries better predict changes in NYT coverage of those countries than do variations in the frequency of his speeches simply mentioning those countries. About a quarter of the time, variations in the number of presidential speeches do better than do variations in presidential use of heroic rhetoric, and about half the time, they predict similar amounts of change in NYT coverage.

However, there are two kinds of situations in which presidential use of heroic rhetoric does appear to have a greater effect than presidential speeches on NYT coverage. The first is in the case of more-salient countries, as was suggested above by the results of my Granger tests. Once more, Peake (2001) found that when countries are less salient, any presidential speech mentioning that country is likely to have an agenda-setting effect; while when countries are more salient, the average presidential speech mentioning those countries are less likely to have an agenda-setting effect. My own Granger tests above substantiate this finding. However, deepening Peake’s (2001) observation, I found that when countries already are highly salient, presidential use of heroic rhetoric in connection with those countries is more likely than regular presidential speech to have an agenda-setting effect. The results reported in Table 6.5 demonstrate how heroic rhetoric is more likely to increase NYT coverage in the case of more-salient countries than it is in the case of less-salient countries, where any kind of presidential mention, whether high or not in heroic rhetoric, is likely to have an agenda-setting effect.<sup>75</sup>

LESS SALIENT COUNTRIES	Speech more likely to predict NYT increase	Heroic rhetoric more likely to predict NYT increase	Speech and HR equally likely to predict NYT increase	MORE SALIENT COUNTRIES	Speech more likely to predict NYT increase	Heroic rhetoric more likely to predict NYT increase	Speech and HR equally likely to predict NYT increase
Sudan	0	0	1	Afghanistan	0	1	0
Angola	0	0	1	South Africa	0	1	0
Panama	1	0	0	Yugoslavia	0	1	0
Haiti	0	0	1	Lebanon	1	0	0
North Korea	1	0	0	Iran	0	0	1
Libya	0	0	1	Mexico	1	0	0
Colombia	0	0	1	Canada	1	0	0
El Salvador	0	0	1	Germany	0	1	0
Nicaragua	0	0	1	China	1	0	0
Pakistan	0	1	0	Iraq	0	0	1
Cuba	0	0	1	Israel	0	0	1
Poland	1	0	0	Soviet	0	1	0
<i>Total:</i>	3	1	8	<i>Total:</i>	4	5	3

Table 6.5: Relative Effects of Speech and HR on NYT Coverage, Conditioned by Saliency

<sup>75</sup> For the case of this comparison, I dropped Grenada since neither speech nor heroic rhetoric had any statistical effect on NYT coverage, but included Poland (which I had previously eliminated in order to have an even number of salient and less-salient countries.)

This finding is intriguing. It may suggest that the president will choose to increase the heroic imagery in speeches concerning states that are already reasonably well known in order to boost their salience for an imminent political purpose. Alternatively, it may suggest that journalists are especially sensitive to changes in presidential rhetoric when it concerns a country of which they are already aware. Finally, it might be that countries' salience may in part be due to their role within a presidential heroic narrative, to their playing an attractive or memorable part in the larger drama of international relations. If this is the case, then presidential speeches which emphasize this narrative will be more cognitively consonant with existing schemas about those countries and be more easily accepted and transmitted (Entmann 2004).

The other situation in which heroic rhetoric is more likely than speech to predict an increase in NYT coverage is the case of countries with which the US had significant military engagement during the 1981-2005 time period. While the US had some level of military dispute with many of the states in my study, according to either the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) or Correlates of War project (CoW) database, it is also possible to group together major US-led military activities in which a substantial number of American troops were stationed on the ground. Of the countries I follow here, that list would include Grenada, Panama, Haiti, Iraq, Yugoslavia and Afghanistan. One could also legitimately include the Soviet Union, the US opponent in the multi-decade Cold War. Countries with which the US was "at war" in this sense, even for a short time, demonstrated a stronger average media effect from presidential heroic rhetoric than was the case for countries with which the US did not have this experience:

"At War" During 81-05	Speech more likely to predict NYT increase	Heroic rhetoric more likely to predict NYT increase	Speech and HR equally likely to predict NYT increase	Not "At War" During 81-05	Speech more likely to predict NYT increase	Heroic rhetoric more likely to predict NYT increase	Speech and HR equally likely to predict NYT increase
7 cases	14%	43%	43%	18 cases	33%	17%	50%

Table 6.6: Relative Effects of Speech and HR on NYT Coverage, Conditioned by War

This outcome reported in Table 6.6 could illustrate a couple of potential relationships between presidential heroic framing and NYT coverage. It seems most likely that the president's use of heroic rhetoric during the periods of war was especially influential on NYT coverage, and that this effect averaged out to evidence a moderate effect persisting over the entire 1981-2005 period. However, it is also possible that the effect of presidents reflecting, with heroic imagery, on past military engagements is in itself influential on NYT coverage.

I then turned to look briefly at the effects of NYT coverage on presidential speech. Again, this is a problematic variable to test for effects since it includes both events and the impact of media coverage, but examining it nonetheless expands our understanding of the presidential use of heroic rhetoric. In this sense, the most intriguing finding was that NYT coverage usually predicted a greater response in the presidential heroic rhetoric variable than it did in the presidential speech variable (in 17 cases), and in the remainder of the cases NYT coverage predicted an approximately equal response both presidential speech and presidential heroic rhetoric (8 cases). This means that presidents often respond to an increase in NYT coverage with an increase in the amount of heroic rhetoric they use in connection with a country. As I asserted

in Chapter 5, presidents are likely to use heroic imagery in connection with threatening world circumstances as a form of reassurance. The fact that presidential use of heroic rhetoric seems to commonly respond to increases in NYT coverage suggests that this reassuring speech may be something that presidents do in a routine way, not just in response to major crises.

#### “High Heroic Rhetoric” Speeches vs. “Low Heroic Rhetoric” Speeches

I next looked more closely at each country’s heroic rhetoric variable by breaking it down into two parts – a variable for each country describing trends in presidential speeches low in heroic rhetoric and a variable for each country describing trends in presidential speeches high in heroic rhetoric. For most countries, presidents made more speeches low in heroic rhetoric than they did speeches high in heroic rhetoric, although the opposite was true for a large minority of countries. While Granger tests using these variables were not significant due to the low effect size once the heroic rhetoric variable was broken up in this way, I conducted VARs and IRFs to compare such trends as did exist across the two conditions. These plotted IRFs are all included in Appendix E.

	Total High HR Speeches	Total Low HR Speeches	Ratio of High HR to Low HR
Mexico	270	728	0.371
Canada	240	610	0.393
Colombia	92	190	0.484
Haiti	178	335	0.531
South Africa	148	254	0.583
Yugoslavia/Bosnia	398	636	0.626
Panama	110	171	0.643
Germany	360	530	0.679
Iran	318	424	0.75
Cuba	285	365	0.781
Soviet	1230	1530	0.804
North Korea	213	254	0.839
Grenada	90	100	0.9
China	302	335	0.901
Lebanon	244	265	0.921
Poland	274	271	1.011
Nicaragua	278	271	1.026
Angola	105	102	1.029
El Salvador	176	170	1.035
Israel	621	592	1.049
Pakistan	243	216	1.125
Sudan	72	61	1.18
Libya	206	145	1.421
Iraq	832	574	1.449
Afghanistan	760	380	2

Table 6.7: Numbers and Proportions of Speeches High and Low in Heroic Rhetoric



In Table 6.7, I recorded the total number of presidential speeches high and low in heroic rhetoric for each country. As I demonstrate in Table 6.8, I observed a direct and unsurprising effect between the proportion of heroic rhetoric that presidents used in connection with a country and the effects from the high and low heroic rhetoric variables. In the cases of countries where presidents used a greater proportion of heroic rhetoric, the high heroic rhetoric variable was three times as likely to have a stronger effect than the low heroic rhetoric variable on NYT coverage. In countries where presidents used a lower proportion of heroic rhetoric, the low heroic rhetoric variable was twice as likely to have a stronger effect on NYT coverage than the high heroic rhetoric variable. This suggests that in general, heroic rhetoric does not predict greater coverage. In many cases NYT coverage is agnostic regarding the heroic content of presidential speech and responds more to presidential speech frequency than to the heroic imagery in the speech.

	Stronger effect on NYT from High HR Speeches	Stronger effect on NYT from Low HR speeches	Equal effects
10 countries with lowest proportion of high to low HR	30%	50%	20%
10 countries with highest proportion of high to low HR	60%	20%	20%

Table 6.8: Effects of Average Proportion of HR in Speeches on HR Effect on NYT Coverage

However, while this is one important relationship to observe, it does not fully determine the relationship between the president's use of heroic rhetoric and NYT coverage. Under particular conditions, the relationship between the proportion of heroic rhetoric in presidential speech and the effects of low heroic rhetoric and high heroic rhetoric speeches is transformed. When looking specifically at more salient countries, for example, there is a different relationship between the proportion of heroic rhetoric in presidential speeches and the likelihood that a speech will increase media attention (Table 9).

	Median ratio of High HR to Low HR	Stronger effect on NYT from High HR Speeches	Stronger effect on NYT from Low HR speeches	Equal effects
12 more-salient countries	0.777	50%	42%	8%
13 less-salient countries	0.869	31%	38%	31%

Table 6.9: Relative Effects of Speech and HR on NYT Coverage, Conditioned by Salience

Although the median proportion of high heroic rhetoric to low heroic rhetoric speeches for more-salient countries is 0.777 – that is, the presidents delivered around one-third more low heroic-rhetoric speeches than high heroic-rhetoric speeches – and the median proportion of high heroic rhetoric to low heroic rhetoric speeches for less-salient countries is 0.869, speeches high in heroic rhetoric are more likely to have a stronger effect on NYT coverage when a country is salient relative to when it is less salient. (In other words, the strong effect of heroic rhetoric on NYT coverage of salient countries which I noted above continues to hold, trumping the tendency of NYT coverage to respond proportionately to all speeches delivered by the president.)

Similarly, in the case of countries with which the US was at war at some point between 1981 and 2005 the basic relationship of proportional effects of rhetoric on NYT coverage fails to

hold (Table 6.10). Although the median proportion of high heroic rhetoric to low heroic rhetoric in presidential speech regarding countries with which the US was at war was 0.804, and the median proportion of high heroic rhetoric to low heroic rhetoric in presidential speech regarding countries with which the US was not at war was 0.911, presidential speeches high in heroic rhetoric were more likely to drive NYT coverage among countries with which the US had been at war relative to countries with which the US had not been at war.

	Median ratio of High HR to Low HR	Stronger effect on NYT from High HR Speeches	Stronger effect on NYT from Low HR speeches	Equal effects
“At War” countries	0.804	71%	0%	29%
Countries not “at war”	0.911	28%	56%	16%

Table 6.10: Relative Effects of Speech and HR on NYT Coverage, Conditioned by War

Finally, in looking briefly at the effect of NYT coverage on presidential speech, I find that the trend I observed above continues to hold. Despite the fact that the average presidential speech about the majority of these countries is more likely to contain low rather than high amounts of heroic rhetoric, NYT coverage is more likely to provoke a presidential speech high in heroic rhetoric than low in heroic rhetoric. NYT coverage was more likely to engender a high-heroic speech in nine country cases, while it was more likely to produce a low-heroic rhetoric speech in six country cases. It was equally likely to produce a high or low heroic rhetoric speech in eight cases and was likely to have no effect on presidential speech, when examined in this fashion, in two cases.

#### Pre-War Periods: A Closer Look

Given the relationship that exists between presidential use of heroic rhetoric and NYT coverage in the case of countries with which the US was “at war,” I decided to look more closely at the effects from presidential use of heroic rhetoric in the periods leading up to these conflicts. Using the ICB conflicts database, I identified the five conflicts occurring within my time period in which there was at least one month between the international conflict trigger initiating the conflict and US entrance into the conflict. I selected these conflicts, which included three separate US conflicts in Iraq, the Kosovo War, and the invasion of Haiti, because I wanted to observe the president’s agenda-setting power over a period of time where the possibility of war would loom large. However, even though the time between the international conflict trigger (the 9/11 attacks) and US entry into the conflict was slightly less than one month, I also added the October 2001 US invasion of Afghanistan because of its recency and importance to US foreign policy. Table 6.11 shows the ICB “crisis number” for each incident, the date of the incident which triggered the possibility of war, and the date that the US entered into war with the country in question.

ICB Crisis Number	Country	Date of Conflict Trigger	Date of US Entry into Conflict
846	Iraq	08/02/90	01/17/91
890	Haiti	07/07/94	09/19/94
933	Iraq	10/31/98	12/16/98
945	Kosovo	02/20/99	03/24/99
955	Afghanistan	09/11/01	10/07/01
970	Iraq	09/12/02	03/20/03

Table 6.11: ICB Crises and Pre-Conflict Periods

I then turned to testing the relationships between presidential speech, presidential use of heroic rhetoric, and NYT article frequency during these pre-conflict periods. Since the amounts of time I was examining here were much smaller than the time periods I was looking at earlier, I had to use variables which were drawn from the actual daily number of speeches high in heroic rhetoric, speeches low in heroic rhetoric, and NYT stories rather than weekly averages. Methodologically, this is problematic as the techniques I am using should incorporate the probability of speeches or NYT articles occurring on each day rather than an actual count of their occurrences. In my work above, I resolved this problem by calculating weekly daily averages for this “count data,” which helps somewhat to relieve the problem of under- or over-dispersion in the data model which can occur when using actual data counts. However, I found the problem of properly estimating probabilities for daily data to be too challenging. I must therefore offer the caveat that this work might be indicative, but contains a substantial known flaw which is likely, at minimum, to bias my standard errors.

That said, I constructed variables in a similar way to how I constructed the variables in the IRFs for the entire 1981-2005 time period above. For the period preceding US entry into these conflicts, I counted the number of presidential speeches per day that were high in heroic rhetoric (more than 2 percent of the words coming from my heroic rhetoric dictionary), the number that were low in heroic rhetoric (fewer than 2 percent of the words coming from my heroic rhetoric dictionary) and the number of NYT articles published per day which mentioned the relevant country. There was a substantial range in the ratio of speeches high in heroic rhetoric to speeches low in heroic rhetoric, from approximately twice as many low-heroic rhetoric speeches to more than twice as many high-heroic rhetoric speeches (Table 6.12).

ICB Crisis Number	Country	Number of High HR speeches	Number of Low HR speeches	Ratio of High HR to Low HR
846	Iraq	23	31	0.742
890	Haiti	4	7	0.571
933	Iraq	5	6	0.833
945	Kosovo	5	9	0.556
955	Afghanistan	7	3	2.333
970	Iraq	71	26	2.731

Table 6.12: Proportions of Speeches High and Low in Heroic Rhetoric in Pre-Conflict Periods

As one might expect, NYT coverage of these countries during the pre-conflict time period was much higher than the average NYT coverage of these countries over the entire 1981-2005 period. It is reasonable to expect that during these time periods, there is a substantial effect from the inertia of media coverage, in that the focus on these countries is likely to be sustained from day to day during the pre-conflict period regardless of what the president says. However, the VAR method allows me to control for the lagged effect of earlier NYT coverage, which should clarify the independent effects of presidential speech on media coverage.

I identified the appropriate number of lags for each case and then performed VARs and IRFs to examine the relative effects of presidential speeches low and high in heroic rhetoric. Although none of the results was significant because of the very limited number of data points in each equation, the direction and magnitude of the average effects was striking.

	Stronger effect on NYT from High HR Speeches	Stronger effect on NYT from Low HR speeches	Equal effects
Pre-conflict periods	100%	0%	0%

Table 6.13: Relative Effects of Low and High HR Speeches on NYT Coverage, Pre-War Periods

In all but one case, the effect from low-heroic rhetoric speeches was negative: that is, the average presidential speech which was low in heroic rhetoric predicted the NYT publishing fewer than average stories about the country during the pre-conflict period. Meanwhile, in every case, the average presidential speech which was high in heroic rhetoric predicted the publication of an additional 0.5 to 3 NYT stories at the moment of highest media response to the presidential speech. (See Appendix E for graphs.)

While these results cannot be taken alone, my studies collectively point to the substantial effect of wartime context on the agenda-setting power of presidential heroic rhetoric. When the US public is primed to think about war, either as an imminent possibility or, perhaps, as an important historical experience, presidential heroic rhetoric plays a greater role in encouraging media coverage of the country in question. Given the magnitude of effect suggested by my tests of the agenda-setting power of heroic rhetoric in the pre-conflict period, this relationship may be quite substantial. Although presidential heroic rhetoric receives less attention under normal circumstances, presidential heroic rhetoric may suddenly start to be seen as news in and of itself at the point of going to war.

Presidential heroic rhetoric may also have a special effect on media coverage when the rhetorical object is a country which already enjoys public salience. If any presidential speech is likely to have an effect on the coverage of a particular country when that country is not well known, this regular effect from presidential speeches faces a higher threshold when the president's subject is already frequently mentioned in the media. A presidential speech that employs higher than average heroic rhetoric may increase media attention in this kind of case.

In many instances, the category of countries with which the US has been at war and the category of more-salient countries overlap, making it unclear whether it is mainly the condition of war which explains the agenda-setting power of presidential heroic rhetoric. However, these categories do not fully overlap, and for salient countries like Israel and South Africa, presidential heroic rhetoric has significant agenda-setting power even though the US has never been at war with them. What we know about the history of US relationships with Israel and South Africa

makes the agenda-setting power of presidential heroic rhetoric seem logical, but at the moment it seems difficult to identify a common condition which would explain these cases. Identifying conditions under which presidential heroic rhetoric successfully achieves agenda-setting power appears to be a rich subject for research.

### The Relationship Between Presidential Heroic Rhetoric and Congressional Attention

Encouraged by the results from my analysis of the power of heroic rhetoric to aid in presidential agenda-setting, I examined the effect that presidential use of heroic rhetoric had on affecting the Congressional agenda. This set of studies was more time limited for I only had access to my source of data for Congressional attention from 1989 onwards; thus, my study for effects connected to Congressional attention covered the period 1989 to 2005. I used the same measures of weekly averages of presidential speech, presidential use of heroic rhetoric, and numbers of NYT stories which I used in my other studies above, but limited to the years 1989-2005. To measure the Congressional agenda I used the Federal News Service database and calculated the number of Congressional hearings per week in which each country was mentioned. Finally, I then calculated the appropriate number of lags and performed VARs which included one presidential speech variable (either presidential speech or presidential heroic rhetoric), the NYT article frequency, and the Congressional attention variable. I subjected each VAR to a one-impulse shock and plotted the IRFs which I have included in the Appendix.

While the relationship between presidential speech or presidential use of heroic rhetoric and NYT coverage remains generally robust and variable in these tests, Congressional attention turns out to bear little to no relationship to presidential speech or heroic rhetoric. I found that presidential use of heroic rhetoric could be said to have a small effect on Congressional attention in only three of the cases I examined: Afghanistan, Angola and Yugoslavia. Presidential speech did appear to have some effect on Congressional attention in eight more cases – Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Germany, Iran, Nicaragua, Pakistan, and Poland – although the effect in all of these cases was quite small.

The fact that heroic rhetoric influences Congressional attention in the case of at least two of the countries with which the US has been at war (Afghanistan and Yugoslavia) suggests that the war condition continues to be a significant determinant of the power of heroic framing. Here we see that it may allow the president to use heroic framing to achieve at least a degree of Congressional agenda-setting. Beyond this condition, however, I would hesitate to assess a regular relationship between presidential speech and Congressional attention. Similarly, Congressional attention does not appear to have a regular effect on presidential speech or use of heroic rhetoric, at least as I have measured these variables. While Peake (2001) found slight relationships between presidential speech and Congressional attention to certain foreign policy issues, Edwards and Wood (1999) did not, although they did find robust effects on Congressional attention from presidential speech about domestic policy issues. My findings appear to fall somewhat in the middle of these two results.

Meanwhile, Congressional attention appears often to have a more significant relationship with NYT stories. In the IRFs one can see that Congressional attention is sometimes influenced

by, and sometimes influences, NYT coverage. While the relationship between the Congressional attention and presidential heroic rhetoric may be quite minor in general, it is distinctly possible that the relationship becomes stronger, via their common link to media coverage, during periods when presidential heroic rhetoric has greater media agenda-setting power. To identify whether this is the case, an more in-depth study of those time periods would be necessary.

## Conclusion

While the president may seek to emphasize certain foreign policy domains through the use of heroic framing, it seems that there are some regular constraints on the degree to which this tactic will be effective in drawing media attention. For foreign policies regarding countries which are less well-known to the public, there is an excellent chance that any form in which the president mentions that country will increase the degree to which it receives media attention. The heroic framing of these less salient countries does not necessarily buy the president's subject any additional increase in media attention. Meanwhile, for countries which are somewhat better known, the president's use of heroic framing may indeed help increase media attention to his subject. The most consistent condition for the increased media agenda-setting power of heroic framing appears to be the context of US-led war. Given the president's strong unilateral powers to initiate conflict, media outlets may be particularly responsive to the content of his speeches during the critical period preceding potential conflicts. Similarly, although presidents have very little power to set Congressional agendas through their speeches, Congressional attention does appear to be somewhat more affected by presidential heroic rhetoric in connection with countries with which the US has been at war.

The effects on presidential heroic rhetoric from media attention, meanwhile, demonstrate that the president's use of heroic rhetoric in response to events or media attention is a fairly routine rhetorical decision. I have hypothesized that the president's use of heroic framing in response to threatening situations represents a way of soothing an anxious public. The fact that the president's use of heroic rhetoric responds regularly to NYT coverage but not to Congressional attention further suggests that the rhetoric does represent an act of comforting presidential "interpretation" rather than political argument.

While simply increasing his level of heroic rhetoric does not automatically increase media attention to the subject of the president's speech, heroic rhetoric nonetheless appears to be an effective rhetorical tool for specific moments. When the nation's attention is already sufficiently focused on another country, either persistently or during a crisis, presidential heroic rhetoric may play a role by further heightening that attention. Where the president's message depends on the media channel for transmission, heroic rhetoric is likely to help, and unlikely to hinder, that process.



## Chapter 7: 1983

[Joseph Kingsbury-Smith]: What wishes would you like to convey to the American people on the occasion of the new year of 1983?

[Yuri Andropov]: I should like to begin by sincerely wishing every American family well-being and happiness in the coming new year of 1983. This means, first and foremost, wishing all Americans peace, lasting peace and prosperity based on peaceful work and fruitful co-operation with other nations. Today, Soviet people and Americans have one common enemy - the threat of war and everything that intensifies it. The Soviet Union wants peace to be safeguarded and strengthened and is doing everything within its power to this end, being well aware that now there is no more important task in international politics than to stave off the growing threat of nuclear war, impose control on the nuclear arms race and put an end to it. I should like to hope that America, too, would make its own contribution, worthy of such a great country, not to spurring on the arms race and whipping up belligerent passions, but to strengthening peace and friendship among nations (“Andropov's Interview for American Columnist” 1982).

In looking at the use and effects of heroic framing, I have to this point examined presidential speeches in the aggregate. This has been a useful way for me to substantiate a variety of hypotheses over a longer period of time. However, these hypotheses do not only concern aggregated numerical representations of speech. My thinking about the causes and effects of heroic framing fundamentally relates to how a certain kind of presidential speech operates in practice, in the real-time unfolding of political behavior. While my hypotheses about heroic framing can be confirmed in large-N statistical tests, it is important to see how they work in context as well. For that reason, this chapter will examine the role of heroic framing in context. I will examine how a president used heroic framing to promote policy, reassure the US public, and signal conflict-readiness to foreign audiences during the course of 1983. 1983 offers a particularly good opportunity to look at direct effects from heroic framing, since a close reading of this year demonstrates that Reagan’s speech helped shift the relationship between the US and the Soviet Union from an ambiguous, cautious state to the brink of nuclear war. This particular movement certainly depended on the existence of an underlying mutual hostility. However, it also offers a good case for examining heroic framing, since we already know that this state of heightened readiness for war presents one particular scenario in which heroic framing can have a serious impact.

In this case study I will consider both the hypotheses I’ve developed about the reasons why presidents use heroic framing in their speech and the kind of effects – both intended and unintended – that heroic framing can have. I have posited that presidents use heroic rhetoric in connection with two kinds of domestic situations: when they are trying to generate support for a desired foreign policy and when threatening events require them to provide reassurance to the public. I have also reviewed how heroic framing is likely to operate as a signal to foreign policy targets that the president is authentically committed to the issue at stake in a conflict. Because both foreign and domestic audiences are implicated in my hypotheses, I will consider the effects

of Reagan's increases in heroic framing on both audiences. These effects may contain presidentially unintended outcomes, when communications which were principally intended for one of those audiences were "misperceived" by the other. This misperception is one consequence of the multiple meanings of presidential heroic framing.

Over the course of this chapter, I will look at Reagan's choice to use heroic framing in the context of two important events from this year: his promotion of the Strategic Defense Initiative in the context of supporting his defense budget, and his response to the Soviet shootdown of KAL flight 007. In support of his defense priorities, Reagan likely chose to increase his use of heroic framing as a tool of domestic persuasion. Reagan made two major speeches full of heroic imagery in order to persuade the American public of the importance of his defense policies: a speech before the National Association of Evangelicals on March 8 and a national televised address on March 23. Later in the year, Reagan responded to the Soviet shootdown of civilian flight KAL 007 with a dramatic increase in heroic framing intended to reassure a threatened American public. I examine four speeches Reagan made in quick succession on this subject which together represent the trajectory of an increasingly heroic response to an uncertain threatening event.

In both of these cases, Reagan's intention in using heroic framing seems to relate to domestic concerns rather than an interest in entering into physical conflict with the Soviet Union. Reagan's heroic framing was thus directed to domestic audiences. Nonetheless, the fact that presidential heroic framing of foreign policy inevitably sends a signal to both domestic and foreign audiences led Soviet leadership to mistakenly interpret some unrelated, routine events as a sign of imminent nuclear attack. After describing the context of and domestic response to each of these rhetorical shifts, I will demonstrate how Reagan's heroic framing had the unintended effect of signaling a commitment to military escalation with the Soviet Union.

To set the stage, I will first review the status of US-Soviet relations in the early 1980s, which were in decline following the detente of the late 1960s and early 1970s. During the Carter presidency, the renewed American focus on Soviet human rights abuses stalled the reduction in tensions which the countries had enjoyed under Nixon. However, Carter had also maintained a degree of Soviet goodwill through stopping work on the cutting-edge MX missile and B-1 bomber and thereby demonstrating his commitment to arms control (Andrew and Gordievsky 1990). Reagan, meanwhile, campaigned against Carter for the presidency on a platform of increased toughness towards the Soviets. Even before his presidential campaign, Reagan had been famous for his particularly evocative speech regarding the US struggle against the Soviets:

We're at war with the most dangerous enemy that has ever faced mankind in his long climb from the swamp to the stars, and it's been said if we lose that war, and in so doing lose this way of freedom of ours, history will record with the greatest astonishment that those who had the most to lose did the least to prevent its happening. Well I think it's time we ask ourselves if we still know the freedoms that were intended for us by the Founding Fathers....If we lose freedom here, there's no place to escape to. This is the last stand on earth (Reagan 1964).

Soviet officials initially believed that Reagan's heated rhetoric during the campaign was intended to help him win the election and assumed that he would become more reasonable upon attaining the presidency. However, when Reagan did not moderate his language about the Soviet Union during his first months in office, Soviet leaders became even more convinced of the likelihood that the US would start an unprovoked nuclear war (Dobrynin 1995). The Soviets had already begun worrying about the increased possibility of a US first strike since NATO announced, in late 1979, an intention to base Pershing II missiles in West Germany (Pry 1999). In May 1981, upon determining that Reagan's rhetoric was not merely campaign talk, KGB Chief and future Premier Yuri Andropov announced a new intelligence program named VRYaN to monitor a number of indicators that KGB officers believed would signal an imminent US-led nuclear attack (Andrew and Gordievsky 1990).<sup>76</sup> Officers working on the VRYaN program were directed to look at a wide, not necessarily obvious array of indicators, including the supplies of blood donor centers, the level of payments to blood donors,<sup>77</sup> changes in the number of cars in the parking lots of certain government offices, and the number of hours windows in governmental buildings were lit (Andrew and Gordievsky 1992). Officers were told even to monitor activity in slaughterhouses, since preparations for a nuclear attack were presumed to involve the slaughter and storage of a large number of cattle (Andrew and Gordievsky 1990).

Meanwhile, in accordance with his campaign rhetoric, the Reagan administration's tactics in fact had become more hostile. Benjamin Fischer (1997) describes how from the first months of 1981, the US military had adopted a strategy of psychological operations (Psyops) against the Soviets consisting of air and sea probes at sensitive Soviet defense locations. Navy fighters simulated attacks on Soviet planes and performed simulated bombing runs over Soviet military installations; in the far north, US submarines practiced attacks on Soviet nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines. Fischer identifies that the point of these exercises was "detering the Soviets from provocative actions and [to display] US determination to respond in kind to Soviet regional and global exercises" (Fischer 1997). Other scholars, however, characterized the overarching US strategy as 'keeping the Soviets on their toes' and maintaining Soviet uncertainty about whether an attack was coming (Mastny 2009). As it turns out, the Psyops were likely effective in this goal. Soviet officials were genuinely quite uncertain about immediate US intentions. However, while one can see how this sort of policy might reduce the probability of a calculated Soviet attack, it seems equally likely to increase the likelihood that the Soviet Union would eventually mistake a false feint for an actual attack and defensively initiate war.<sup>78</sup>

Despite their concerns, both sides continued to work cautiously towards a new nuclear arms reduction agreement. The START negotiations held in Geneva over the course of 1983

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<sup>76</sup> The KGB program name was an acronym for "surprise nuclear missile attack" – "Vnezapnoye Raketno Yadernoye Napadnie."

<sup>77</sup> Soviet intelligence officers either didn't know or didn't believe that blood donation is a volunteer, unpaid practice in the US and UK.

<sup>78</sup> The KAL shootdown which I will discuss shortly in fact did occur on the heels of one sortie in this campaign, in which an American spy plane successfully penetrated Soviet airspace.

were aimed at reducing missile stockpiles on both sides, although the future of the talks had become increasingly tied to the impending deployment of the Pershing II missiles. Reagan refused to move substantially off of his “zero option,” in which the Soviets would remove all of their missiles from Europe in exchange for the US not deploying new missiles in West Europe. The Soviets, meanwhile, made frequent overtures to the peace movement in Europe, hoping that public opinion would successfully block the NATO missile deployments.

### Approaching the Defense Speeches

Two years into the Reagan presidency, the Soviets remained closely attentive to the president’s rhetorical cues. However, in the early months of 1983 it is more likely that Reagan was paying attention to the domestic struggle over his defense budget than to the precise signals he was sending to Soviet intelligence. To look at the key examples of presidential heroic rhetoric during this period, I will first look at the speeches leading up to and including Reagan’s presentation of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) on March 23, 1983. Reagan’s presentation of SDI amounted to a major change in nuclear defense policy. However, laid out as it was in the context of a campaign to develop public support for his defense budget, it seems likely that Reagan used heroic rhetoric in connection with the program mainly in order to develop support for having his program funded and not to signal conflict-readiness to the Soviets.

Reagan had exhibited interest in the SDI program for a considerable period of time. His introduction to missile defense has been attributed to a visit to NORAD in July 1979 during which, according to a domestic policy advisor who accompanied him, Reagan suddenly became aware that “we have spent all that money and have all that equipment, and there is nothing we can do to prevent a nuclear missile from hitting us” (Martin Anderson cited in FitzGerald 2000, 20).<sup>79</sup> Precisely because of this problem, the US defense establishment had developed a strategy which depended on the possibility of achieving mutually assured destruction (MAD). According to MAD, when both states had the capacity to destroy one another, neither state would seek to do so since their attack would result in their own destruction. Adherence to MAD meant that it was in the interest of both states to avoid accelerating the arms race, since doing so might upset the careful balance. Reagan’s interest in moving away from MAD thus represented a substantial challenge to existing theories of international nuclear diplomacy – as well as apparently violating the 1972 US-Soviet treaty on limiting the development of anti-ballistic missile systems – and raised the specter of a new arms race.

Many of Reagan’s chief advisors were not interested in advancing missile defense, so the arms developments in the first years of Reagan’s presidency were marked chiefly by an increase in the amount of funding sought from the annual defense budget and a return to the development

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<sup>79</sup> Numerous commentators, including FitzGerald (2000), Cannon (2000) and Rogin (1987), have described Reagan’s original appreciation of space-based missile defense as originating in the science-fiction technology Reagan witnessed in films, particularly in *Murder in the Air* (1940), a Reagan vehicle featuring a superweapon capable of blasting enemy aircraft out of the sky.

of the MX missile. Pursuing these programs became more difficult, however, when the MX missile program ran into substantial public and Congressional opposition on both ideological and practical fronts. In 1980, the newly powerful nuclear freeze movement spurred large public demonstrations and developed support in Congress, to the extent of nearly passing a bill which would have halted the development, production and deployment of any new nuclear weapons (FitzGerald 2000). The MX missile program was affected not only by this movement, but also by practical criticism of the basing plans for the missile. The MX missile was supposed to be the “Peacekeeper,” as Reagan evocatively named it,<sup>80</sup> because it was intended to rectify the problem that existing Minuteman missiles were vulnerable to a first-strike attack by the Soviet Union. However, opponents pointed out that the based MX missiles would be just as vulnerable as Minuteman missiles. The problem of finding an invulnerable base for the MX missile thus became a major political hurdle for the program’s continued viability. By the end of 1982, Reagan had proposed a “dense pack” solution which would have put the missiles in silos in close proximity to one another, on the assumption that any incoming Soviet missiles would destroy one another while at least some of the MX missiles would survive. Opponents were not persuaded. The intractability of the basing problem eventually led Congress to vote on December 8, 1982 to end financial support for the MX missile (Duric 2003).

As a result of this defeat, Reagan’s defense advisors advocated a radical change to the administration’s approach to the US nuclear program. Counseled by deputy national security advisor Robert McFarlane, the Joint Chiefs of Staff briefed Reagan on February 11 on the existing technological possibilities for missile defense, promoting it as a viable new defense program. Reagan strongly approved of the new program and wanted to make it public as quickly as possible. When the national security advisor told him that Reagan could possibly speak about it when the White House used its already-reserved airtime on March 23, Reagan enthusiastically said, “Let’s do it!” (Cannon 2000, 286)

Although Reagan’s existing rhetorical stance towards the Soviet Union was full of heroic imagery, the shift which came in the period between his briefing on space-based anti-ballistic missile defense and March 23 represented an even further crystallization of this trend. I believe that this shift in rhetoric occurred because of Reagan’s awareness that he needed to build a public case for a substantial increase in the defense budget and a dramatic new turn in defense policy. There is no reason to believe that Reagan’s underlying beliefs about the Soviet Union changed substantially in this brief time period, but it does seem plausible that in SDI Reagan found a reason to shift from a relatively conciliatory, temporary rhetorical posture based on the then-common arms control frame – established when that seemed the best way to couch his defense budget – to a more active heroic frame befitting the new defense policy.

Reagan’s shift was mainly reflected in two speeches characterized by strong heroic framing: a speech now known as the “Evil Empire” speech, delivered on March 8, 1983, and the speech on March 23, 1983 in which he actually introduced the SDI program. Even before these memorable speeches, however, one can trace the beginning of a shift. The differences between the president’s framing of the Soviet Union prior to and following the February 11 briefing

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<sup>80</sup> He apparently originally wanted to call it the “Peacemaker,” after the Colt .45 revolver, but advisors warned against the potential for copyright problems (*Time*, December 2, 1982).



foreshadow the rhetorical crescendo which was to come. Prior to February 11, the president's discussions of the Soviet Union exclusively revolved around arms control negotiations.

Reagan's arms control framing of early 1983 typically positioned the Soviet Union as a reluctant, canny, but ultimately viable negotiating partner. For example, in Reagan's first statement of the year on the Soviet Union, his January 8 Radio Address on US-Soviet Relations, Reagan observed:

In recent days, some encouraging words have come out of Moscow. Clearly the Soviets want to appear more responsive and reasonable. But moderate words are convincing only when they're matched by moderate behavior. Now we must see whether they're genuinely interested in reducing existing tensions. We and our democratic partners eagerly await any serious actions and proposals the Soviets may offer and stand ready to discuss with them serious proposals which can genuinely advance the cause of peace (Reagan 1983c).

In every set of prepared remarks mentioning the Soviet Union, the president referenced American willingness to negotiate for arms control, the acknowledgment that the Soviet Union had appeared reasonable recently, and the hope that negotiations would be successful. This was true even of the State of the Union Address, a form of speech which is well known for its use of compelling and powerful rhetoric (Cohen 1995, Wood and Peake 1998). Rather than use the platform of the 1983 State of the Union to demonize the Soviet Union, Reagan spoke only about his "hopes for positive change" with regard to Soviet arms control negotiations, using a framing similar to his other speeches of the period (Reagan 1983d).

Furthermore, Reagan expressed a variety of other conciliatory sentiments during this period. For example, he spoke about the need to end the grain embargo against the Soviets, reflecting that the embargo gave other countries the opportunity to lock in long-term grain deals when the US stopped supplying grain. Reagan even went so far as to rue the damage the embargo did to America's reputation as a "reliable supplier" (Reagan 1983e). In his 1983 meeting with Jewish leaders, Reagan might easily have used the opportunity to demonize the Soviet Union, since Jewish leaders of the time advocated on behalf of persecuted Soviet Jewish "refuseniks." Meanwhile, although Reagan acknowledged the adversity faced by Soviet Jews, he asked the leaders to consider the possibility of "a new era of improved East-West relations" (Reagan 1983f). The positivity of Reagan's framing faltered only when Reagan responded, unscripted, to questions from reporters. On January 20, Reagan's prepared statement that we could "build a more peaceful world through arms reductions negotiations with the Soviets" broke down under a reporter's questions, revealing that while Reagan's rhetorical stance promoted the potential of arms negotiations, he also believed the Soviets to be an immoral people who were incapable of keeping promises (Reagan 1983g).

Reagan's positive framing of the possibility of arms control began to shift substantially in the latter part of February. The first signs of this shift can be seen in Reagan's creation of the first "Lithuanian Independence Day" on February 16, 1983.<sup>81</sup> Reagan's Lithuanian Independence Day

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<sup>81</sup> This holiday was to be observed in addition to the Reagan-initiated annual "Baltic Freedom Day." While perhaps not actually cause for real national celebration, these



proclamation included substantially more potent heroic imagery with reference to the Soviet Union than any of his remarks delivered since the beginning of the year. An emblematic description of Soviet tyranny and the call for American action predicts Reagan's incipient change in political approach:

Twenty-two years later Soviet tyranny imposed itself on Lithuania and denied the Lithuanian people their just right of national self-determination. In the intervening years, the United States has refused to recognize the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union. An enduring belief in freedom for all people unites Americans everywhere. But we must be vigilant in the protection of our common ideal, for as long as freedom is denied others, it is not secure here (Reagan 1983h).

Reagan's references to the threatening nature of the Soviet Union accelerated through the second half of February. To some degree, this rhetorical change reflects the nature of some of the audiences before which he had been scheduled to speak, including the Conservative Political Action Conference on February 18 and the American Foreign Legion on February 22. Nonetheless, it is unquestionable that Reagan seized these opportunities to revisit the dangers posed by the Soviet Union, rather than their quality as negotiating partners:

The Soviets sent their Cuban mercenaries to Angola and Ethiopia, used chemical weapons against innocent Laotians and Cambodians, and invaded Afghanistan—all with impunity (Reagan 1983i).

In the struggle now going on for the world, we have not been afraid to characterize our adversaries for what they are. We have focused world attention on forced labor on the Soviet pipeline and Soviet repression in Poland and all the other nations that make up what is called the "fourth world"—those living under totalitarian rule who long for freedom.... We pointed out that totalitarian powers hold a radically different view of morality and human dignity than we do... Those of you in the frontline of the conservative movement can be of special assistance in furthering our strategy for freedom, our fight against totalitarianism (Reagan 1983j).

Even in Reagan's Saturday Radio Address of that week, the looming Soviet threat makes an appearance, contrasting sharply with his arms control framing in the Radio Address of January 8.

Speech Episode #1: March 8, 1983

The most significant shift from the earlier, more cautious period occurred on March 8, when Reagan spoke before the annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando. While this speech never mentions the concrete policy of missile defense, it can easily

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commemorations are useful as one kind of index of Cold War sentiment.

be seen as a high point in Reagan's heroic framing of the relationship between the US and the Soviet Union. This speech is most famous for its inclusion of the phrase "evil empire" to describe the Soviet Union. According to Anthony Dolan, Reagan's primary writer for the speech, Dolan had used the word "evil" to refer to the Soviet Union in a draft of an earlier memorable speech – Reagan's June 8, 1982 speech before British Members of Parliament at Westminster. However, Reagan had excised it during his personal editing of the speech (Schlesinger 2008). For his remarks in Orlando, however, Reagan accepted Dolan's suggestions and revisited many of the most dramatic excluded passages from that earlier speech. The final result was an unequivocal characterization of reluctant heroes and irredeemable villains in the international arena:

Yes, let us pray for the salvation of all of those who live in that totalitarian darkness-pray they will discover the joy of knowing God. But until they do, let us be aware that while they preach the supremacy of the state, declare its omnipotence over individual man, and predict its eventual domination of all peoples on the Earth, they are the focus of evil in the modern world....[B]ecause they sometimes speak in soothing tones of brotherhood and peace, because, like other dictators before them, they're always making "their final territorial demand," some would have us accept them at their word and accommodate ourselves to their aggressive impulses. But if history teaches anything, it teaches that simple-minded appeasement or wishful thinking about our adversaries is folly. It means the betrayal of our past, the squandering of our freedom...So, in your discussions of the nuclear freeze proposals, I urge you to beware the temptation of pride—the temptation of blithely declaring yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil (Reagan 1983k).

Despite the overwhelming and sensational nature of the language, it is worth pointing out that the substance of the speech did not necessarily entail new foreign policy. Reagan already was on record as opposing a nuclear freeze and the speech backhandedly supports the utility of the current approach to arms negotiations. Furthermore, in asserting the need to achieve "peace through strength," this speech espoused a principle which was already strongly present in Reagan's overall perspective on foreign policy.<sup>82</sup>

Nonetheless, the tenor of the speech represented something strongly different from what Reagan had been saying recently. Some scholars have argued that the dramatic "evil empire" phrasing was not intended to express a shift in policy, but that the rhetoric was rather chosen as the kind of language appropriate for an evangelical audience (FitzGerald 2000). However, on January 31, 1983, Reagan gave remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Religious Broadcasters, a similarly-minded audience, and while Reagan presented a speech that was

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<sup>82</sup> The phrase "peace through strength" has enjoyed a long political career, emerging with some regularity in foreign policy addresses and the political platforms of both parties as early as the 1950s (as established by searching for the phrase within the Public Papers of the Presidents database of the American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu>.)

similarly religious in tone – including Bible quotes, relaying his intention to make 1983 the “Year of the Bible,” and describing the religious motivation lying behind several of his policy proposals – he does not use heroic imagery in connection with the Soviet Union. In this speech, Reagan’s only mention of the Soviet Union comes in an approving reference to the growth of Soviet Christianity occurring despite the official Communist mandate of atheism (Reagan 1983). The reason for Reagan’s rhetorical change was not the audience and there is no evidence that it was driven by a significant political event. Rather, the most likely explanation is that it was the opening salvo in Reagan’s public sales pitch for his defense budget, including the new strategic defense initiative.

### Domestic Reception

If the intention lying behind Reagan’s rhetoric was to increase attention to his speech, he was successful. The media response in the following days revealed that the speech was indeed effective at driving increased attention to the president – and that the subject of much of the increased attention was the matter of the speech itself. The speech had been originally viewed as an unimportant “B-list,” routine speech to political supporters (Schlesinger 2008, 327). However, it came to be covered as a news event in its own right. Despite the fact that the speech contained no new policy positions, the dramatic language alone had served to signal to journalists that a serious policy advocacy effort was underway.

A number of the articles about the speech demonstrate the efforts made by journalists to identify the significance of the shift in rhetoric. The day following the speech, March 9, New York Times journalist Francis X. Clines covered it with a front-page article titled “Reagan Denounces Ideology of Soviet as ‘Focus of Evil,’” a headline strongly highlighting the change in Reagan’s rhetoric.<sup>83</sup> The article’s first sentence reports on two of the speech’s uses of the term “evil” to describe the Soviet Union. However, Clines then attempted to interpret the policy implications of the speech by reporting that “White House aides” said the speech was intended as a rebuttal to religious proponents of the nuclear freeze. He then went on to survey the positions of a variety of religious groups on the nuclear freeze (Clines 1983). A number of articles produced by other sources on the same day derived similar meaning from the speech, interpreting it primarily as a response to Christian advocates of the nuclear freeze (Globe and Mail, March 9, 1983; AP, March 9, 1983; Gerstenzang 1983).

However, other articles from the day following the speech identified the speech’s rhetoric itself as its main political content. Hendrick Smith (1983) contacted several senators for a response and found that they were also most affected by the rhetorical rather than substantive elements of the speech:

“That speech is going to get people's backs up,” said Senator Claiborne Pell, a Rhode Island Democrat. And Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware, another Democrat, commented:

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<sup>83</sup> Dolan had, in fact, contacted Clines in advance of the speech to tell him to pay attention to it (Schlesinger 2008).

"The President either does not understand what the American people are saying or he is deliberately misrepresenting it when he says the freeze is unilateral disarmament. To the degree that the speech will influence debate on these policies, it can only serve to polarize that debate further."

Identifying the same significance of rhetoric from an opposing perspective, Adam Clymer (March 9, 1983) suggested that the extreme and polarizing rhetoric was intended to persuade evangelical Christians of Reagan's continued willingness to represent them politically by defining the world in religious, moralistic terms. Another journalist noted that Reagan's March 8 speech evoked campaign rhetoric (Sandler 1983). The New York Times editorial writer Anthony Lewis, meanwhile, described the display as "primitive":

If there is anything that should be illegitimate in the American system, it is such use of sectarian religiosity to sell a political program. And this was done not by some fringe figure, but by the President of the United States. Yet I wonder how many people, reading about the speech or seeing bits on television, really noticed its outrageous character. Our political sensibilities have become so degraded. (Lewis 1983)

This second interpretation of the speech thus focused on its exceptionally dramatic, "outrageous character" – a move, observed Smith, some viewed as "the keynote of a drive to induce Congress to approve a large rise in military spending and to deflect pressures for ...undesirable concessions to Moscow" (Smith 1983). The foreign policy implications of this effort were further clarified by the March 9 release of an administration statement on US defense policy. Reagan's press secretary declared the speech – and the administration's defense policy booklet released the following day – to be part of the administration's effort to publicize the Soviet's military growth and to remind the public of the threat posed by the Soviet Union (Gerstenzang 1983).

The president was thus not able to convince all of the journalists covering his March 8 speech to adopt his framing of the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, in line with the expectations of heroic framing, Reagan's heroic imagery both raised the salience of his speech and his subject and also helped affect the framing of the Soviet Union in the domestic press. By the very coverage of his speech, Reagan was able to effect a more frequent association in US-based news between the Soviet Union and threat by successfully increasing the overall number of domestic news articles framing the Soviet Union in terms of threat. Since this represented an about-face from his previous efforts to frame the Soviet Union as a partner in ongoing arms negotiations, this alone may have represented an important success for preparing the way for Reagan's upcoming public address.

Furthermore, while Reagan's speech led to an immediate increase in coverage in the form of articles about the president's speech, it also served as a persistent subject of media attention in the week that followed. While the articles about Reagan's March 8 speech declined in number, continued periodic mentions of his new use of the word "evil" acted to prolong the media effects from his rhetorical shift. Articles from national newspapers like the New York Times about the speech found their way into local papers over the course of the next weeks, and commentators who countered the initial media perspectives on Reagan's speech began to appear. On March 19,

the Washington Post ran an editorial entitled “Presidential Preaching: Why Not?” and the UPI news service offered an article asserting that religious leaders saw nuclear war, not the Soviets, as the greatest moral danger (Anderson 1983). While these later articles presented an effort to counter the argument made by Reagan on March 8, their publication effectively served to prolong its message.

## Soviet Reception

Perhaps due to the substantial US media coverage of the “minor” speech, Soviet media responded surprisingly quickly, issuing articles denouncing it the very next day. Reagan’s speech, claimed the TASS news agency, demonstrated that he was “pathological...[and] can only think in terms of confrontation and bellicose, lunatic anti-communism” (TASS March 9, 1983). At the same time, the TASS article noted that the president’s rhetoric may be aimed at obtaining Congressional approval for his defense budget, suggesting that Reagan’s rhetoric might be understood as a strategic political move for domestic purposes rather than a signal of military escalation. Later, however, a political commentator for TASS returned the volley of heroic framing against Reagan:

In this recent speech in Orlando, Florida, President Reagan approvingly quoted ... [a] man [who] had declared that he loved his little daughters more than anything else in the world, but that he would prefer to see them dead rather than that they should grow up under communism. The President declared that some people in the audience had even applauded the words of this child-hating father, and Reagan himself presumably applauded louder than anyone else. No doubt if Hitler's cannibals heard these words they too would burst into stormy applause....American children...who, in the President's own words, write to him that they often wake up at night dreading the possibility of a nuclear war and crying in fright. Their fears will now be even greater, for the White House incumbent appears prepared to sacrifice them to his rabid anti-communism and militarism (TASS March 11, 1983).

US allies also attended to the president’s words, with the understanding that if tensions between the US and Soviet Union increased, that could have serious consequences for the rest of the world as well. The week following the president’s speech, a reporter from the London Times interviewed Reagan and told him, in the context of asking about the speech, that speaking about relations between the US and the USSR “as a confrontation of good and evil...gave the impression, at least, that there is really no logical conclusion except war and that reconciliation would be very difficult between the two powers” (Reagan 1983m). The Toronto-based Globe and Mail published several articles on the speech. Drawing a metaphorical connection between Reagan’s identification with Hollywood Westerns and his new rhetorical stance towards the Soviets, the Globe and Mail reflected that, among the Soviets, Reagan’s March 8 speech revealed that there was “not a white stetson in the bunch. Can it be safe even to talk to the satanic forces - and if not, where do we go from here?” (“A fireside chat.” 1983).

Overall, while the president may have been specifically targeting the domestic press, the effect of his speech was to create both domestic and international media attention to his strong rhetoric on the Soviet Union. His heroic imagery led the Soviet press to identify an American message of increased militarism, as demonstrated by the articles cited above. However, although Reagan's speech altered the amount of American press attention to the Soviet Union, it did not seem to create an absolute shift in the amount Soviet press coverage of the US. This may be because Reagan was already regularly excoriated in the Soviet press for his militaristic rhetoric. Given that Reagan was already routinely featured for his speech in the Soviet press, there may have been no additional reporting necessary when Reagan truly did increase the militarism of his rhetoric.

### Speech Episode #2: March 23, 1983

The second major example of heroic framing from this period came on March 23, when Reagan advocated for his defense plan in a national television broadcast. Unlike the March 8 speech, this speech was well-advertised in advance as a political event worthy of media coverage. Just as the news articles in the US press about Reagan's speech of March 8 began to die down, articles about Reagan's upcoming national speech in support of his defense budget began to appear. By citing the president's arguments about the need for the national speech – for example, his argument that the Democrats' desire to cut his proposed increases to the defense budget would “bring joy to the Kremlin” (Davis 1983) – journalists aided Reagan in commencing the adversarial, heroic framing of the Soviet Union that he would pursue throughout the speech.

Reagan's March 23 speech was not quite as confrontational as his March 8 speech, but it nonetheless maintained a consistent framing. Rather than asserting the evil of America's antagonist, which he had already recently, memorably and effectively done, Reagan argued that he needed to have the tools to counter that antagonist. He provided an explicitly heroic explanation for his requested multi-billion dollar increase to the existing defense budget:

That budget is much more than a long list of numbers, for behind all the numbers lies America's ability to prevent the greatest of human tragedies and preserve our free way of life in a sometimes dangerous world...The calls for cutting back the defense budget come in nice, simple arithmetic. They're the same kind of talk that led the democracies to neglect their defenses in the 1930's and invited the tragedy of World War II. We must not let that grim chapter of history repeat itself through apathy or neglect (Reagan 1983n).

The second part of the speech focused on the details of the threat posed by the Soviet Union, with specifics highlighting the need for individual items in the defense budget. While the heroic framing remained in a limited way, the effect was more pragmatic than evocative.

The final section of the speech represented an interesting shift, however. Rather than continue to focus on the Soviet Union as the source of threat, the president redefined the terms of the speech and identified nuclear weapons themselves as the problem. Under the new heroic



imagery in the speech, the scientific community was identified as the hero, receiving a call to rid the world of the threat of nuclear missiles.

If the Soviet Union will join with us in our effort to achieve major arms reduction, we will have succeeded in stabilizing the nuclear balance. Nevertheless, it will still be necessary to rely on the specter of retaliation, on mutual threat. And that's a sad commentary on the human condition. Wouldn't it be better to save lives than to avenge them?...I call upon the scientific community in our country, those who gave us nuclear weapons, to turn their great talents now to the cause of mankind and world peace, to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete....I am directing a comprehensive and intensive effort to define a long-term research and development program to begin to achieve our ultimate goal of eliminating the threat posed by strategic nuclear missiles. This could pave the way for arms control measures to eliminate the weapons themselves. We seek neither military superiority nor political advantage. Our only purpose—one all people share—is to search for ways to reduce the danger of nuclear war. My fellow Americans, tonight we're launching an effort which holds the promise of changing the course of human history. There will be risks, and results take time. But I believe we can do it. As we cross this threshold, I ask for your prayers and your support (Reagan 1983n).

Reagan's discussion of strategic missile defense effectively reimagined the threat which faced the US. While the Soviet Union is positioned as a threat, it is a terrestrial threat, not one representing a "threshold" which must be crossed with trepidation. In terms far more inspiring and vivid than the aspects of his speech concerning the Soviet Union, Reagan identified the technological work of achieving strategic anti-ballistic missile defense as the truly significant battle, the one which will offer "new hope for our children" (Reagan 1983n). At the same time, this repositioning did not repudiate his original narrative positioning the heroism of the US against the villainy of the Soviet Union. Rather, it was within the context of a traditional heroic framing of the Soviet Union, in the course of the rather routine political debate over the annual defense budget, that Reagan suspended yet a second heroic narrative: a transcendent vision of world peace achieved through the elimination of nuclear threat.

The argument embedded in this rhetoric is, in fact, quite self-contradictory. How can someone argue for the urgent need for new nuclear weapons and simultaneously seek to eliminate the threat they pose? Why position nuclear weapons themselves as the new threat? Why wouldn't Reagan simply argue for strategic defense as a way to defend against the Soviet Union? The rational conundrum that this argument poses points to the fact that heroic framing does not necessarily require great logical consistency. The significance of the framing lies in its instinctive, emotional appeal and its *narrative* consistency. According to the new heroic narrative promoted by Reagan in his March 23 speech, the Soviets occupy a smaller (albeit still critical) role on the way to America's true mission of achieving the boon which will redeem humanity.

## Domestic Reception

Despite the consistency of Reagan's speech with the heroic narrative, an examination of speech coverage revealed that Reagan's shift from the defense budget to SDI had confused some journalists who didn't understand why this program was being introduced in the context of a budget debate. However, just as with the March 8 speech, Reagan's rhetoric was again persuasive enough for many to play down the illogical connections within the speech – or its potential political consequences – at least initially. The day after the speech, the Washington Post titled a transcript of the president's remarks "A Decision Which Offers A New Hope for Our Children" (1983). The New York Times published an analysis of the speech titled "New Vision for Reagan," in which Reagan's remarks were covered favorably, concluding that if the US "can develop a reliable nuclear defense, Mr. Reagan would probably be correct in his prediction that it would change 'the course of human history'" (Mohr 1983). In a slightly more measured analysis, the Washington Post published an analysis that "acknowledged pitfalls" while also praising the president:

Reagan has done something rare. He has launched a new technological crusade, not as specific as the race to the moon, but at least potentially important, to see if American technological prowess can achieve a radical shift in emphasis that might "free the world from the threat of nuclear war" (Getler 1983).

In other words, for many media outlets the president's rhetoric had allowed him to successfully skate over both the problem of logical inconsistency and the apparent violation of a major US-Soviet treaty posed by the SDI program.

However, these problems became more apparent in news coverage by the second day after the speech, after a day in which scientists, political opposition figures, and Soviet officials took their opportunity to respond to the problems in the president's speech. Most prominently, opponents pointed out that the technology to achieve the goal set by Reagan was far from available at present and that the program represented a violation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty. In the days following the speech, Reagan's missile defense program came to be popularly known by critics as the "Star Wars" defense program. This frame was apparently offered first by Senator Edward Kennedy, who combined an observation of the president's rhetorical strategy and the content of his proposal in describing the president's speech as "misleading red scare tactics and reckless Star Wars schemes" (Hoffman 1983). The "Star Wars" label stuck remarkably well, becoming routinely attached to the missile defense program in news analyses and popular responses. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger quickly found himself needing to directly refute the label and assert that SDI "is not a 'Star Wars' fantasy" (Benedict 1983).<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Another Democratic leader, Senator Daniel Inouye, apparently described the missile defense program as "Buck Rogers weapons" in his response delivered immediately after the president's speech, but the "Buck Rogers" label was very quickly overtaken by "Star Wars" (Clines 1983a).

The success of the “Star Wars” label may have occurred because the program seemed so distant from contemporary technology that it was nearly science fiction, but it was equally apt as an observation of how Reagan had invested the project with the aura of the heroic narrative. For example, a congressman – humorously combining observations on both of Reagan’s recent heroic framings – noted that the only thing Reagan had failed to mention was “that the Evil Empire was about to launch a Death Star against the United States” (Rep. Tom Downey cited in Fitzgerald 2000, 210). This direct parallel between the president’s description of his policies and the film *Star Wars* may have just seemed like a catchy way to denigrate the program, but the reference to the film was actually quite apt from the perspective of Reagan’s use of heroic rhetoric. The film *Star Wars* was consciously designed by George Lucas to evoke Joseph Campbell’s description of the heroic narrative ( “The Mythology of Star Wars with George Lucas and Bill Moyers” 1999). Thus, the use of the label “Star Wars” to describe Reagan’s heroic project – a journey in which superhuman skill would be required in order to achieve the goal of ending war as we know it – is extremely apt. “Star Wars” describes a tremendously engaging and affecting story which creates an emotional reality, but which bears no necessary relationship to political or physical reality.

In addition to the “Star Wars” framing, news stories began to focus on Soviet opposition to the missile defense proposal. Soviet Premier Andropov gave an interview with the Soviet paper *Pravda* in order to publically criticize Reagan’s speech. Several news outlets identified a serious increase in Soviet-US tensions in Andropov’s response, pointing out that “the interview contained some of the strongest personal attacks on a U.S. president by a Soviet leader in recent years. Veteran observers here could not recall a Soviet leader publicly accusing an American president of lying” (Doder 1983). Meanwhile, other journalists found Andropov’s response to represent more of a “tantrum for political effect” than a meaningful increase in tensions ( “The Kremlin Loses Its Cool” 1983).

In sum, the president’s speech successfully raised substantial domestic media attention. However, even more than in the case of his March 8 speech it was not clear that all of this attention redounded to Reagan’s advantage. In combining a strong heroic framing of the US-Soviet relationship with a heroic program designed to overcome the existential trauma of nuclear weapons, Reagan composed an emotionally consistent and journalistically irresistible narrative of challenge, superhuman effort, and ultimate technological salvation. However, despite the thematic coherence of the speech, Reagan was proposing a controversial and unfeasible new defense program – and mainly, apparently, in order to increase the public appeal of his defense budget. While Reagan’s commitment to missile defense seemed genuine, he is also reported to have viewed the SDI announcement as a way to excite public opinion about the future of defense and to provide “‘a little surprise’ in the speech that would leave all those defense cutters on the Hill swooning and gasping with admiration” (Pach Jr. 2003, 104). Many journalists seem to have been skeptical about the technique.

In terms of domestic political results, therefore, the effect of Reagan’s increase in heroic framing seemed to have been mixed. According to the White House’s assessment, the March 23 speech generated a great deal of public support for the president’s orientation to national defense (FitzGerald 2000). However, it did not effectively change the political calculus over the 1984 defense budget, and may have even further distanced legislators who felt Reagan used science

fiction in his argument. Further, Reagan's polarizing rhetoric may ultimately have made it too difficult for his congressional supporters to achieve compromise in committee negotiations (Isaacson 1983). Rather than effectively increasing the perception of the necessity of strong and innovative defense, Reagan's heroic framing here may have veered too far into the realm of fantasy to be a credible political frame.

## Soviet Reception

While the Soviet media response to Reagan's Orlando speech signaled official Soviet displeasure, the fact that Andropov himself responded to the SDI speech demonstrated the dramatic increase in Soviet official discomfort. Soviet news publications were famous for their use of extreme language. Soviet leaders, however, generally spoke with substantially greater caution. Thus, it was a sign of deteriorating bilateral relations that Andropov not only spoke, but also leveled the first explicit personal attacks by a Soviet leader against an American president in several decades. Moreover, he also described American military capabilities with a high degree of specificity, which was very unusual for leaders to do in public (Fischer 1997). Andropov's response to Reagan's speech was released directly to the international press in English even before its publication in the Soviet Union. It reads as a strong effort to notify Reagan that he had received signals of increased military hostility:

The incumbent US administration continues to tread an extremely perilous path. The issues of war and peace must not be treated so flippantly. All attempts at achieving military superiority over the USSR are futile. The Soviet Union will never allow them to succeed. It will never be caught defenceless by any threat. Let there be no mistake about this in Washington. It is time they stopped devising one option after another in search of the best ways of unleashing nuclear war in the hope of winning it. Engaging in this is not just irresponsible, it is insane ("Andropov's Replies to 'Pravda'" 1983).

Vladimir Shlapentokh (1984) identifies the period following Reagan's speech as a time in which there was a radical shift in Soviet propaganda, to the effect that leaders now believed that the US was no longer seeking a balance between the two states but was instead actively preparing for war. Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin (1999) note that the KGB interpreted Reagan's speech as the beginning of an effort to psychologically prepare the US public for nuclear war. Further, Michael McGwire (1991) identifies Andropov's response to Reagan's speech as marking the beginning of the ascendancy of a group of hard-liners within the Communist Party who sought to revise core Soviet foreign policy principles in response to US change. In the months that followed, the Soviet military led exercises which, for the first time, included a simulation of mobilizing and interacting with nuclear weapons (Zubok 2009). Soviet decisionmakers met at the annual Central Committee plenum in June and began to develop a "decision-in-principle" which was expressed by Andropov in the form of a declaration on September 28. Andropov's

declaration enshrined the Soviet perception that the US was not interested in peace but rather in domination (“Andropov Statement on International Issues” 1983).<sup>85</sup>

The Soviet response to Reagan’s speech poses a critical question for my argument about the significance of heroic framing, alone, for signaling. While the Soviet leadership appears to have been uncertain about the direction of US-Soviet relations at the beginning of 1983, by the middle of 1983 they appear to have resolved that detente was truly over and that Reagan was likely to be planning a first strike. Did the Soviets determine that the US had become irrevocably more bellicose because of the proposed SDI program, or because of the rhetoric Reagan used to promote it?

This question points to the very essence of the meaning of the word “signal.” A signal is a message about an object or reality which the message-sender knows and the message-recipient learns through receiving the message. The reality which the Soviets sought to understand was whether or not the Reagan administration intended to move away from a policy of detente and towards a policy in which a nuclear first strike was more likely. In that sense, new nuclear-relevant programs and rhetoric which was much more hostile than usual towards the Soviet Union were both signals that would support an interpretation of that reality.

However, what is essential to observe in this particular moment was that the SDI program was, as an isolated program, not a clear signal of bellicosity. As a simple object without any hostile rhetoric attached to it, SDI is ambiguous. Reagan presented SDI as a tool of defense which would render nuclear weapons obsolete. In that sense, in its significance as a technology which could remove the threat of mutual nuclear annihilation, SDI was potentially attractive. Andropov himself acknowledged as much in his response to Reagan’s speech (“Andropov’s Replies to ‘Pravda’ 1983). The Soviet Union could even be said to be particularly receptive to the notion of the complementary expansion of missile defense systems, having deployed a small anti-ballistic missile defense system to protect Moscow prior to the signing of the ABM treaty.<sup>86</sup>

Given that the SDI program alone was ambiguous, what Soviet leadership needed to determine was the intention which lay behind SDI. After Andropov acknowledged that it would be possible to interpret SDI as a legitimate tool of defense, he pointed out:

But this may seem to be so only on the face of it and only to those who are not conversant with these matters. In fact, the USA's strategic offensive forces will continue to be developed and upgraded at full tilt and along quite a definite line at that, namely that of acquiring a first nuclear-strike capability. Under these conditions the intention to secure the possibility of destroying with the help of the ABM defences the corresponding strategic systems of the other side, that is of rendering it incapable of dealing a retaliatory

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<sup>85</sup> The Soviet perspective developed over the course of 1983 was unquestionably sealed by the Soviet perception of American hostility resulting from the KAL shootdown, as I will shortly review.

<sup>86</sup> Meanwhile, they could also be seen to be especially sensitive to the American violation of the ABM treaty, as they had been resistant to agreeing to limit the pursuit of their own ABM goals in the first place (Weber 1990).



strike, is an attempt to disarm the Soviet Union in the face of the US nuclear threat. One must see this clearly in order to appraise correctly the true purport of this "new concept" ("Andropov's Replies to 'Pravda'" 1983).

Instead of leaving open the possibility that SDI could lead away from nuclear war, Andropov used the other signals he had received to divine Reagan's true intentions motivating the program. If his other signals were positive, he might have successfully framed SDI as a defensive program. The other signals Andropov observed, however, were principally derived from the hostile tone of Reagan's heroic rhetoric. As Raymond Garthoff (1984) notes, while at the time Andropov defensively dismissed the notion that the Soviet Union was being swayed by "mere rhetoric,"

The problem was not rhetoric, but perception of policy aims and intentions. And in this context the offending headline rhetoric not only offset the occasional soothing advocacy of dialogue but was seen as underlying and explaining what were perceived to be American actions (112).

Soviet Ambassador to the US Anatoly Dobrynin was on record as expressing this sentiment even more succinctly: "Words are deeds" (Church 1984).

#### Approaching the Shootdown of KAL Flight 007

Following the heated speech of March, Reagan returned to a more conciliatory posture in the coming months. Reagan offered a series of further arms reductions proposals and in July, sent a private note to Andropov offering to open a confidential line of communications (Daniloff 2008, 293). Although Andropov declined to begin private negotiations, Andropov also did not level any more accusations against the US during the summer months. Thus, while Soviet-US relations were not precisely warm in mid-1983, there were indications that, at least from the US side, officials were hoping to ease the tension. According to Raymond Garthoff (1994), after the heated rhetoric of March, the summer of 1983 marked a period in which more moderate officials were ascendant in shaping US foreign policy. On June 15, Secretary of State George Shultz delivered remarks edited by Reagan to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in which he announced that a critical aspect of US policy towards the Soviets must be "engaging the Soviets in an active and productive dialogue on the concrete issues that concern the two sides. Strength and realism can deter war, but only direct dialogue and negotiation can open the path towards lasting peace" (Shultz 1983, 69). An increased pace of confidential talks between US and Soviet officials led to agreements which were made public at the end of August. The first, an agreement on grain sales, marked the first major bilateral pact signed between the two countries since the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan ("Grain pact signed" 1983). At the same time, US and Soviet officials agreed to begin talks on re-opening consulates which had also been closed after the invasion of Afghanistan and on the resumption of cultural exchanges between the two countries. State department officials characterized the agreements as movement towards the normalization of relations between the two countries (Gwertzmann 1983). US Agriculture



Secretary John Block went a step further, by stating that with regard to grain sales to the USSR, “We want not only to be a good supplier - we want to be the best supplier” (Nash 1983). Finally, while Reagan’s advocacy of SDI had unquestionably complicated the ongoing negotiations, Soviet and US officials continued their conversation around arms reductions.

This state of affairs suggests that at the time of the KAL shutdown, the US was not likely to be looking for opportunities to exacerbate antagonisms with the USSR. The media coverage of the USSR at this time confirms that there had not been a period of buildup of stories about the Soviet Union, nor had Reagan been making unusual numbers of speeches about the Soviet Union over the course of the two months prior to September 1. Rather, both Reagan and the media appeared to be recovering from the active period of presidential defense policy advocacy. Having achieved the goals of popularizing the controversial “Star Wars” program and finally obtaining Congressional support for the continued funding of MX missile production in May, Reagan’s references to the Soviet Union had returned to a relatively routine level.<sup>87</sup> While the president referenced the Soviet Union as a supporter of hostile Latin American regimes, he refrained from identifying the Soviets as the direct cause of problems in this region. Even in discussing the pro-Western Solidarity organization in Poland, Reagan’s references to the role of the Soviet Union in crushing the movement remained oblique (Reagan 1983a). As Strobe Talbott (1983) wrote at the end of August, “The two superpowers have been circling each other warily, sometimes menacingly. If they came together, many feared, it would be to fight. Now, suddenly, there is a faint hint of tango music in the air.”

The shutdown of a civilian plane by the USSR, however, transformed the erstwhile tango partners back into enemies. During the night of August 31/September 1, 1983, KAL Flight 007 flew between a refueling in Anchorage, Alaska and its final destination of Seoul, South Korea. The flight had originated in New York and it carried 269 people, including one US Congressman.<sup>88</sup> Over the course of the flight, the airplane deviated from its flightpath to end up twice within Soviet airspace; the second time it entered Soviet airspace, over Sakhalin Island, Soviet fighters shot it down. The chain of events leading to Flight 007's course deviation – and the Soviet response to it – has been the subject of substantial scrutiny over the last twenty-five years. Several excellent books have been devoted to seeking to understand the precise course of events which led to the shutdown (Dallin 1985, Young and Launer 1988, Hersh 1986) and what the authors tend to conclude is that the shutdown was the product of an overexcited Soviet military mistake in a context of frequent American provocations.

As soon as the shutdown occurred, it represented a critical puzzle in need of interpretation, which is what Reagan found himself called upon to provide. Reagan’s role in

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<sup>87</sup> Despite Reagan’s rhetorical efforts, most observers credited the eventual success of Reagan’s MX missile proposals to the legitimation of the proposals provided by the April 1983 Scowcroft Commission report (Isaacs 1984).

<sup>88</sup> The congressman killed on the flight was Rep. Lawrence McDonald (GA), chairman of the John Birch Society and “uncontestably the most conservative member of Congress” (Krebs 1983). McDonald’s significance within the conservative movement may have even further mobilized conservative condemnation around the event.

interpreting the shootdown became particularly critical when there was no Soviet response at all regarding the plane for 24 hours, and then on September 5 only an acknowledgment that “warning shots” had been fired before the plane was no longer observed (Horne 1983). The General Seymon Romanov’s statement from September 5 also made the comment that the flight’s trespass over Soviet airspace had been a deliberate American provocation, like nine other illegal overflights by US planes which had occurred previously in the year (“South Korean Airliner: Statement by Soviet General” 1983). Several days after that, on September 9, Soviet officials acknowledged destroying the plane but argued that it had been on a US intelligence mission (Dobbs 1983). Given the magnitude of the event, the period of uncertainty and the failure to “own up” to the action was unacceptable to Americans seeking answers.

### Speech Episode #3: Reagan Responds to the Shootdown of KAL 007

Four sequential speeches from Reagan reveal his incremental development of a heroic narrative around this frightening and enigmatic event. Examining them one by one, I will point out the increasing identification of the Soviet Union with villainy and the identification of Americans with heroism in the face of public threat. In line, too, with the flexibility of heroic framing, I will point out how the heroic frame shifts easily and quickly between its functions as epideictic (ceremonial, reassuring) speech and symbouleutic (persuasive) speech. As the heroic frame emerges more clearly over the course of Reagan’s statements, so too do his opportunities to include some policy advocacy with his official interpretations of the frightening public event.

Reagan’s initial statement reveals the ambiguity of the initial situation, in which a formal narrative had not yet emerged:

I speak for all Americans and for the people everywhere who cherish civilized values in protesting the Soviet attack on an unarmed civilian passenger plane. Words can scarcely express our revulsion at this horrifying act of violence. The United States joins with other members of the international community in demanding a full explanation for this appalling and wanton misdeed. The Soviet statements to this moment have totally failed to explain how or why this tragedy has occurred. Indeed, the whole incident appears to be inexplicable to civilized people everywhere (Reagan 1983b).

While the president’s suspicion of the Soviet Union comes through clearly, this initial statement frames the shootdown as “appalling and wanton” and “inexplicable,” leaving open the possibility that the event was the result of an accident or negligence. Reagan presents the failure of Soviet explanation as a problem, suggesting that it is possible that the Soviets might have an excuse which would render the event more comprehensible.

However, it became clear quite quickly to Reagan that the event required a more forceful statement of condemnation. Although the specific events of the shootdown remained obscure because of Soviet unwillingness to share information about it, Reagan began on the next day to address the event through the perspective of the heroic frame, in which the downing of KAL 007 was motivated by pure Soviet villainy. The adoption of a heroic perspective on the accident was

an easy choice for Reagan to make. Casting the event as evidence of deliberate viciousness on the part of the Soviet Union fit easily within his established framing of the Soviet Union as the “focus of evil in the modern world.” Moreover, other political voices had begun demanding vengeance for the shootdown and Reagan would have felt compelled to respond appropriately in order to retain the support of his partisans.<sup>89</sup>

A final reason for the adoption of a strong heroic framing for the event lay in the fact that the American public was quite clearly upset and concerned by it. Protestors massed in front of the Soviet mission on the day following the shootdown (Priar 1983). The US military was similarly on high alert for a potential escalation. Seymour Hersh (1986) reported that six US F-15 fighters and a surveillance aircraft were sent to orbit directly outside Soviet airspace near Sakhalin island, “to provoke an incident [and if challenged,] to take advantage of the situation”(74).<sup>90</sup> If heroic framing is useful for reassuring a threatened public, then this was a classic example of a situation in which the president would have felt called upon to reassure.

Indeed, the very fact that in the days after the shootdown the president made a statement nearly each day on the subject suggests the depth of public concern. The growing strength of the president’s heroic framing offered Americans the comfort of a strong and certain interpretation, even if that interpretation reinforced the frightening belief that a malevolent foreign force was out to destroy them. On September 2, Reagan’s initial, open-ended expression of concern began to crystallize around a clearer denunciation of the Soviet Union, drawing a direct relationship between the act of shooting down the airplane and his previous heroic framing of the Soviet Union as constitutionally evil. Reagan established the complementary roles of the heroic narrative by emphasizing the stark moral difference between “civilized societies” and places where civilized “standards do not apply.” His remarks stop short of assigning intention, but does suggest a kind of inevitability to the event given the perpetrator’s known qualities:

And now, in the wake of the barbaric act committed yesterday by the Soviet regime against a commercial jetliner, the United States and many other countries of the world made clear and compelling statements that expressed not only our outrage but also our demand for a truthful accounting of the facts. Our first emotions are anger, disbelief, and profound sadness. While events in Afghanistan and elsewhere have left few illusions about the willingness of the Soviet Union to advance its interests through violence and

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<sup>89</sup> Perhaps the most vocal leader of conservative outrage over the shootdown was Senator Jesse Helms, who barely avoided dying on KAL flight 007 himself. William Link (2008) documents the important political benefits Helms reaped from his near-death experience, his denunciation of Reagan’s weak response to the Soviets over the event, and his use of personal stories from meeting the doomed travelers in their joint layover in Anchorage. In connection with this incident, Helms outdid even Reagan in his use of heroic imagery. Of the Soviets, he argued “these are not folks just like us. They are cruel barbarians. They will do anything to destroy freedom” (257).

<sup>90</sup> Frighteningly, Hersh reports that these actions were taken by local military leaders in the absence of direction from Washington (Hersh 1986).

intimidation, all of us had hoped that certain irreducible standards of civilized behavior, nonetheless, obtained. But this event shocks the sensibilities of people everywhere. The tradition in a civilized world has always been to offer help to mariners and pilots who are lost or in distress on the sea or in the air. Where human life is valued, extraordinary efforts are extended to preserve and protect it, and it's essential that as civilized societies, we ask searching questions about the nature of regimes where such standards do not apply (Reagan 1983o).

Reagan also did not miss the opportunity to strengthen the association between the KAL 007 shooting and Soviet unreliability as a partner in arms negotiations.

Beyond these emotions the world notes the stark contrast that exists between Soviet words and deeds. What can we think of a regime that so broadly trumpets its vision of peace and global disarmament and yet so callously and quickly commits a terrorist act to sacrifice the lives of innocent human beings? What could be said about Soviet credibility when they so flagrantly lie about such a heinous act? (Reagan 1983o)

While his September 2 speech represented a movement into the heroic mode, Reagan's rhetoric on the KAL shootdown became yet more vehement on the following day. On Reagan's weekly radio address on September 3 (Reagan 1983q), he offered a combined set of remarks on the subjects of the KAL 007 shootdown and Labor Day. He began with a reassessment of the attack; while he had called it a "brutal act" on the previous day, Reagan now labeled it "murder." He next pointed out the inhuman, uncivilized qualities of the Soviet Union that made such an attack natural and inevitable for them. However, he then changed subjects, going on to speak about the value of Labor Day and describing the current economic recovery that had been enabled by his domestic policies. Uniting his thoughts on American economic recovery with the feeling of horror inspired by the KAL 007 shootdown, Reagan concluded his remarks with a statement on the fundamental heroism of the American people.

Finally, let me say that on this weekend, I hope you'll take a moment to celebrate not only the working people of this nation but something that makes it all possible—our freedom. As I mentioned at the outset, we've watched with horror these past few days as totalitarianism has shown its ghastly face once again. That's why here in America we must remain a bastion of free men and women working together toward a brighter future (Reagan 1983o).

On September 5, Reagan finally gave a major address on the subject of the shootdown. This address followed the basic model Reagan adopted in his September 3 remarks, but expanded and deepened each judgement and heroic reference. With regard to the Soviet Union, for example, Reagan's assessment to their role had gone from an initial assessment of negligence on September 1, to a barbaric lack of consideration for lost pilots on September 2, to an instance of murder on September 3. Reagan now depicted the role of the Soviet Union as being driven by even more intentional evil.

I'm coming before you tonight about the Korean airline massacre, the attack by the Soviet Union against 269 innocent men, women, and children aboard an unarmed Korean passenger plane. This crime against humanity must never be forgotten, here or throughout the world (Reagan 1983p).

Over the course of his address, Reagan repeated the charge that the incident was a “massacre” five more times. The terms “massacre” and “crime against humanity” suggest brutality and intention on a level beyond even “murder.” To support this assessment, Reagan used secret American intelligence tapes to demonstrate that the Soviet Union knew the flight was a civilian aircraft and shot it down nonetheless (Reagan 1983p).

Although the focus of the speech was the evil done by the Soviet Union and the steps the US planned to take to express condemnation, including the suspension of talks on restoring consulates and a demand for an apology and financial reparations, Reagan nonetheless found an opportunity towards the end of the speech to include a pitch for the MX missile and his defense budget. He mentioned the death of Sen. Henry Jackson, who had coincidentally died of a heart attack on the same evening as the KAL 007 shootdown, and spoke about how Jackson had warned against the Soviet Union and strongly supported the MX missile program. He then described how under President John Kennedy the US devoted a proportionately larger share of its budget to defense and tied this point to the threat now so clearly posed by the Soviet Union. Sandwiched as it was within a speech which was intended to address American concerns about the KAL shootdown, these inclusions reveal the easy interconnection of heroic speech intended for epideictic, consolatory purposes and heroic speech intended for symbolletic, persuasive purposes. Unfortunately, they also make it challenging for attentive audiences to discern the difference between a speech intended merely to reassure an upset public and a speech intended to advocate for a military policy.

Following his advocacy for defense, Reagan concluded his speech with near-perfect fidelity to the heroic narrative.

We know it will be hard to make a nation that rules its own people through force to cease using force against the rest of the world. But we must try. This is not a role we sought. We preach no manifest destiny. But like Americans who began this country and brought forth this last, best hope of mankind, history has asked much of the Americans of our own time. Much we have already given; much more we must be prepared to give. Let us have faith, in Abraham Lincoln's words, "that right makes might, and in that faith let us, to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it." If we do, if we stand together and move forward with courage, then history will record that some good did come from this monstrous wrong that we will carry with us and remember for the rest of our lives (Reagan 1983p).

He begins with the reluctant hero (“this is not a role we sought”) and the call to action (“history has asked much of the Americans.”) Despite their reluctance, Americans are called forth to perform their “duty,” to move forward with the full range of heroic qualities (faith, courage,



selflessness) in order to overcome “monstrous” opponents and achieve an unspecified transcendent goal.

## Domestic Reception

National media outlets responded massively to the shutdown. While the New York Times published an average of six stories a day about the Soviet Union in the two-month period prior to the KAL shutdown, it published an average of over twenty stories a day in the week following the shutdown, an average of fifteen stories a day in the first month following the shutdown, and a still higher-than-average nine stories a day in the second month. The overwhelming number of the major stories on the shutdown adopted Reagan’s frame and Reagan’s evidence, arguing that the Soviets shot down the plane in cold blood, out of an inherent ruthlessness and callous disregard for human life (Entman 2004).

As opposed to the March speeches, Reagan’s rhetoric was not condemned or called excessive. In fact, while many journalists acknowledged that his speech was strong, they began to interpret his strong speech as an attempt to mollify conservative supporters, while actually choosing a more moderate political response. Many major media references to the president’s response to the attack, therefore, went to pointing out the space between the administration position and recommendations from more conservative quarters, such as those of Senator Robert Byrd, who wanted to threaten to shoot down Soviet flights (AP 1983) and Senator Jesse Helms, who wanted to expel all Soviet diplomats (Rhyne 1983). Conservative media expressed more substantial disappointment in Reagan’s responses, with some writers calling the president’s reaction “groveling and weak-kneed” (Lora and Longton 1999, 673) and “limp” (Hayward 2009, 310). Speaking directly to the difference between Reagan’s forceful speech and his measured policy response, columnist George Will lamented, “We didn’t elect a dictionary. We elected a President and it’s time for him to act” (Will cited in Reeves 2005, 169). On the day following Reagan’s September 5 address, many more callers expressed disappointment than satisfaction with the president, upset that the president didn’t go farther in retaliating against the Soviet Union (Reeves 2005).

While many conservatives viewed Reagan’s response as insufficient, rhetoric notwithstanding, more moderate and liberal political voices supported the president’s response. The president’s proposals for a limited set of retaliatory measures passed Congress with near unanimous approval in mid-September. Congressmen asked to speak about Reagan’s response to the Soviets noted that his actions were “temperate but responsive,” “measured and appropriate and calculated to rally the support of the international community,” and “a rational and unemotional response...largely supported by the Congress and the American people” (Welch 1983). Rather than be guided by the more hawkish perspectives within his administration, Reagan was apparently in the same camp as those like then-Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, who acknowledged that while “an act like this cannot help but have an impact on our relationship and on our attitude...We are [nonetheless] going to have to deal with and live on the same planet with the Soviet Union” (Hoffman and Goshko 1983).



In other words, despite the strong heroic framing of his response to the attack, Reagan's reply to the Soviets was seen as being either appropriate or too moderate. Given this general approval, it seems accurate to assess Reagan's use of heroic framing here as a necessary form of release for public fright and anger. This particular example of heroic framing seemed to stem from a need to comfort and reassure the domestic public rather than a desire to persuade them of the rightness of a particular policy direction (although the president did not let the opportunity to do so entirely pass him by.) Meanwhile, given Reagan's decision to issue a policy response to the attack which was very moderate, relative to the strength of his rhetoric, it also seems fair to determine that Reagan's speech was not intended to signal a strong increase in belligerence towards the Soviet Union. Reagan asserted the need to continue with the upcoming arms negotiations in Geneva and declared that the recently-signed treaty on grain sales would stand (Reeves 2005). His verbal response and policy position on the Soviets appeared isolated from one another, as if the speeches had been issued by the nation's "interpreter-in-chief" while the policy was directed by a strategic political leader.

### Soviet Reception

Unfortunately, it seemed that the Soviet leadership did not see Reagan's response as being in any sense moderate. The Soviet response to the shootdown itself was initially a cipher; as it turned out, the public Soviet silence following the shootdown was actually the result of a lack of communication within the Soviet administrative structure. Oleg Gordievsky recounts how Moscow offered no guidance at all for several days following the event to either the Soviet embassy or KGB residency in London (Andrew and Gordievsky 1990). On September 4, KGB headquarters finally began communicating with its residencies on the matter, stating that the entire event had been orchestrated by the US in order to whip up anti-Soviet hysteria (594). From this initial explanation, Soviet leadership evolved a story that KAL 007 was a complicated intelligence operation, coordinated between the US and South Koreans.

Soviet press, following this interpretation, identified further provocation in Reagan's response to the shootdown. Regarding Reagan's September 5 address, a columnist for *Izvestiya* wrote:

US President Ronald Reagan was following his usual repertoire: He began with a prayer and ended with God's blessing, and between the prayer and the blessing he offered American television viewers a monstrous sandwich of lies and hatred...The essence of this malevolent speech threatens mankind not with tranquil days and nights, but with a new intensification of inter-national tension, new brinkmanship, this time on the brink of nuclear missile war, it threatens a catastrophe without precedent in our planet's history ("President Reagan's Broadcast: 'Mendacious Fabrications'" 1983).<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> In a typical post-Cold War historical twist, the writer of this piece, Melor Sturua, has been a fellow at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute since 1991.

Soviet news writers identified one cause of the US “provocation” to lie in an effort to end arms negotiations:

There is one more aspect to this question. The US President asks: How can one conduct negotiations with a state which is capable of such actions? This phrase in itself explains a great deal. Why? Because the US administration is going out of its way to disrupt the process of the normalization of the world situation and to evade solving problems facing the world which are vital to the interests of peoples (“Tass: Washington Trying to Cover its Tracks Over Airline Incident” 1983).

Soviet media similarly viewed both the alleged CIA masterminding of the event and Reagan’s heated rhetoric as part of a deliberate effort to neutralize the European public opposition to the upcoming deployment of Pershing II missiles.

Three quarters of the population of the FRG and Britain are against the deployment of American missiles on their soil. The prolonged brainwashing by the NATO propaganda services has misfired....Clark, Weinberger and Casey have been racking their brains: What should be done on the eve of the ‘hot autumn’? Their joint experience in elaborating plans for "secret" military and subversive operations in Central America by the Pentagon and CIA decided the direction in which their thoughts worked...Only future historians...will know what the three hawks were planning in the last days of August...[but] as soon as the flight of the intruder in the Soviet Far East was cut short on the night of 1st September, Washington 'hawks' spread their wings and raised an unimaginable hullabaloo (“KAL 007 ‘Provocation’ Aimed at Pre-empting ‘Hot Autumn’” 1983).

In other words, Soviet media actors continued to view Reagan’s heroic framing – and even the very shutdown itself – as evidence of persuasion and signaling. In Reagan’s speeches, Soviet observers particularly identified an effort to persuade the European third parties of the unreliability of the Soviet Union for arms negotiations. Official Soviet observers gave no credence to either the potential innocence or genuine horror of US officials.

More critically, however, Andropov himself also appeared not to view Reagan’s remarks as anything other than pure signaling of increasing hostility. On September 28, Andropov gave a formal declaration which represented both the culmination of the new Party orientation developed since the June plenum and also his first statement on the shutdown. Andropov not only continued the arguments made in the Soviet press but put forth a cogent heroic framing of his own, linking the shutdown – and also the SDI program – to the ruthless and reckless nature of the current American administration.

The course pursued in international affairs by the current US administration...is a militarist course that represents a serious threat to peace. Its essence is to try to ensure a dominating position in the world for the USA regardless of the interests of other states and peoples. The unprecedented build-up of the US military potential and the large-scale

programmes for the production of all types of weapons - nuclear, chemical, and conventional - are subordinated to precisely these aims. The USA is now planning to extend the headlong arms race to space as well.... If anyone had any illusions about the possibility of an evolution for the better in the present US administration's policy, recent events have dispelled them once and for all. The administration is going so far for the sake of achieving its imperial objectives that one cannot help doubting whether any restraints at all exist for Washington to prevent it from crossing a line before which any thinking person ought to stop ("Andropov Statement on International Issues" 1983).

Andropov's statement on the shutdown itself shifted the terms of the heroic equation, demonizing the US "perpetrators" of the shutdown scenario.

The sophisticated provocation organized by the US special services using a South Korean aircraft is also an example of extreme adventurism in politics....The Soviet leadership expressed regret at the loss of life which resulted from this unprecedented criminal act of subversion. The loss of life is on the conscience of those who would like to arrogate to themselves the right not to reckon with the sovereignty of states and the inviolability of their borders, who conceived and implemented this provocation, and who literally the next day hastened to force colossal military appropriations through Congress and are now rubbing their hands with satisfaction ("Andropov Statement on International Issues" 1983).<sup>92</sup>

Andropov also spoke directly to Reagan's use of heroic framing, pointing out the variations between "what almost amounts to foul-mouthed abuse alternating with hypocritical sermons on morality and humanity" ("Andropov Statement on International Issues" 1983). Andropov viewed this rhetoric exclusively as a persuasive technique used in order to "slander" the Soviet Union. The fact that Reagan used the opportunity of his speeches to promote his defense priorities, in a way that suggested political persuasion rather than national "interpretation," allowed Andropov to charge:

The 'humanitarianism' of the statesmen who...shift on to others the blame for the death of the people...aboard the aircraft means new mountains of weapons of mass destruction - from MX missiles to containers of neuroparalytic gas ("Andropov Statement" 1983).

Unlike the somewhat more routine excoriations in the Soviet press, however, Andropov's denunciation offered an unfiltered window into Soviet thinking. Andrew and Gordievsky (1990) describe how Reagan's rhetoric reinforced the Soviet belief that an American nuclear attack was imminent. Soviet students were called home from programs in the US because of official fears of

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<sup>92</sup> It is difficult not to see the parallels between Andropov's framing in this case and Reagan's response to the 1988 American shutdown of Iran Air Flight 655, as included in Chapter 5, above. See Entman (2004) for more parallels between the two cases.

the effects of anti-Soviet hysteria. Benjamin Fischer (1997) describes interviews with Soviets traveling abroad who reported:

a series of officially sponsored activities at home [which] fed the frenzy. Moscow organized mass "peace" rallies; sponsored "peace" classes in schools and universities; arranged closed briefings on the "war danger" for party activists and military personnel; designated a "civil defense" month; broadcast excerpts from Stalin's famous 1941 speech to troops parading through Red Square on their way to defend Moscow from the approaching German army; and televised a heavyhanded Defense Ministry film that depicted a warmongering America bent on world domination. The Politburo also considered, but rejected, proposals to shift to a six-day industrial workweek and to create a special "defense fund" to raise money for the military.

The US decision to invade Grenada on October 25 then seemed to provide evidence that the US was in a mood to commit unannounced and unprovoked attacks (Andrew and Gordievsky 1990).

Outcomes: Soviets Respond to Able Archer 83, Reagan Responds to Tension

Into this volatile rhetorical environment, the US military dropped a lit match. An annual military exercise known as Able Archer had been scheduled for early November 1983. This comprehensive NATO exercise simulated the communications and stages of a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union, including the interactions which would be necessary between civilian and military leaders; moving from DEFCON 5 to DEFCON 1; and, in the case of the 1983 exercise, new coded communication formats and periods of radio silence (Pry 1999). While the exercise unfolded, hypervigilant Soviet leaders decided that the exercise was a cover for an actual nuclear attack and began to prepare for war.

On November 5, the KGB's central office sent a telegram to the London residency that a US nuclear attack was finally about to occur. It described a checklist of events which would indicate that the early stages of an attack were in progress and sought confirmation that these events were taking place. On November 8 or 9, the KGB central office sent urgent telegrams to residencies reporting an alert at US bases (Andrew and Gordievsky 1991). The Soviet military was then observed going on alert. Nuclear-capable aircraft were placed on stand-by in Eastern Germany and Poland (Pry 1999). However, as the days went by and the Able Archer 83 concluded as scheduled on November 11, no US attack was forthcoming and the Soviet military stood down.

It seems remarkable now that this tense state of affairs did not spill into actual warfare. Ironically, what may have reassured the Soviets during this tense time was not information they received, but rather the information they did not receive from KGB and KGB-affiliated directorates, particularly the East German spy organization. Vojtech Mastny (2009) argues that because the East Germans were known to have exceptional access to sensitive NATO information, the fact that they could not find evidence from the VRYaN list of indicators about an impending nuclear first strike provided a critical measure of stability during an extremely

sensitive time. If this is the case, then rather than provoking the tensions, we might consider that the Soviet investment into intelligence in the form of the VRYaN project actually served its purpose: that of *accurately* informing the Soviet leadership about the imminence of a nuclear first strike.

News of the Soviet response to the Able Archer exercise did not get back to the US administration as it occurred, but may have been conveyed to Reagan shortly thereafter. Oleg Gordievsky, a double agent working at the KGB residency in London, conveyed information about the extremity of the Soviet tension which Margaret Thatcher later relayed to Reagan (Fischer 1997). Other sources have argued that Reagan's October screening of the ABC television movie *The Day After* led the president to a new level of caution about the danger of nuclear war.

Regardless of the precise reason, Reagan's rhetoric turned a clear corner in the beginning of 1984. Reagan was seemingly now much more mindful of the international signals his words conveyed, regardless of whether they were intended to be read that way or not. In Reagan's address on US-Soviet relations on January 16, 1984 he sounds more like he is speaking directly to the Soviets than in any speech made during the previous year. Reagan's speech offers such an about face from his earlier framing of the Soviet Union that Beth Fischer (2000) identifies this speech as the beginning of the "Reagan Reversal," a pivotal moment in Reagan's foreign policy approach in which he became substantially less confrontational towards the Soviet Union and began seeking greater rapprochement. In this address, Reagan began by reassuring Americans about the excellent state of affairs within their country. He reviews how the defense buildup has left them safer and how the economy is recovering at an excellent pace.

Starting from that comforting foundation, Reagan goes on to entirely reframe the nature of the US relationship with the Soviet Union. Fittingly, he first speaks directly to the recent role of rhetoric in signaling war.

We've been hearing such strident rhetoric from the Kremlin recently. These harsh words have led some to speak of heightened uncertainty and an increased danger of conflict. This is understandable but profoundly mistaken (Reagan 1984).

While here Reagan is ostensibly speaking to the American public, these words seem also to contain a message of reassurance to the attentive Soviet observer: although harsh words have been spoken, Reagan suggests, they should not be interpreted as an interest in war.

Reagan then turned to the core of his argument, which was the promotion of a detente-like relationship based on "peaceful competition."

Neither we nor the Soviet Union can wish away the differences between our two societies and our philosophies, but we should always remember that we do have common interests and the foremost among them is to avoid war and reduce the level of arms. There is no rational alternative but to steer a course which I would call credible deterrence and peaceful competition. And if we do so, we might find areas in which we could engage in constructive cooperation. Our strength and vision of progress provide the basis for demonstrating with equal conviction our commitment to stay secure and to find peaceful

solutions to problems through negotiations. That's why 1984 is a year of opportunities for peace (Reagan 1984).<sup>93</sup>

Reagan then outlined a specific series of steps he believes need to occur in order to secure greater peace in the world. Repeatedly, Reagan repudiated his rhetoric by emphasizing a desire to work together with the Soviets, an acknowledgment of the difficulties they've had working together, and a desire to move past those difficulties. Once more, Reagan spoke directly to the challenges posed by his past rhetoric, and asked the Soviets to disregard rhetoric as a signal of American intent:

I have openly expressed my view of the Soviet system. I don't know why this should come as a surprise to Soviet leaders who've never shied from expressing their view of our system. But this doesn't mean that we can't deal with each other. We don't refuse to talk when the Soviets call us imperialist aggressors and worse, or because they cling to the fantasy of a Communist triumph over democracy. The fact that neither of us likes the other system is no reason to refuse to talk. Living in this nuclear age makes it imperative that we do talk. Our commitment to dialog is firm and unshakeable, but we insist that our negotiations deal with real problems, not atmospherics (Reagan 1984).

Reagan's characterization of his rhetorical choices as "atmospherics" demonstrated the degree to which he may have been previously unaware of just how important those words had been to the American relationship with the Soviets. However, the willingness to take American rhetoric seriously was a rather consistent characteristic of the Soviet-American relationship. Steve Weber (1990) pointed out that while Americans viewed the 1972 Basic Principles of Relations agreement – which was signed just after the other SALT treaties – to be "more or less innocuous rhetoric" (71) the Soviet leadership viewed the American statement on Soviet equality to be one of the critical victories of the negotiations. However, if, as I suggest, Reagan had intended his strong anti-Soviet heroic framing from his major speeches of 1983 to achieve goals exclusively within the domestic sphere, it may have indeed come as an unpleasant surprise to discover that the Soviet Union read those words as a signal of an increasing American readiness for war.

### Concluding Observations

These three speech episodes represented three different uses of heroic framing by Reagan in response to foreign policy issues. The first two speeches I examined were made in support of Reagan's defense budget and SDI program while in a third set he attempted to address and allay domestic fears in the face of the Soviet Union's shutdown of a civilian airliner. In all three

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<sup>93</sup> Once more, the parallel between Reagan's speech and Andropov's at a comparable moment is striking – compare Reagan's language in this speech with Andropov's expression of hope for peace in the new year referenced at the beginning of this chapter.



speech episodes, Reagan appeared to have a domestic audience in mind. In the case of the first two, he sought to persuade the public, and in the case of the third, he sought to reassure the public – with a subsidiary goal of some small degree of persuasion. However, in all three cases, the Soviet leadership responded to Reagan’s heroic framing as if it were a signal of Reagan’s growing commitment to a nuclear first-strike.

In fact, it is the consistency of this signaling effect, despite Reagan’s apparent lack of intention to provide these signals, that becomes the most remarkable product of Reagan’s considerable use of heroic framing in 1983.

<i>Questions about Heroic Speech Events</i>	3/8	3/23	9/1-9/5
Did it drive media attention to Reagan’s subject?	Yes	Yes	No
Did it help instantiate Reagan’s preferred media frame?	Yes	No	Yes
Did it signal credible commitment to the Soviets?	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 7.1

Table 7.1 above provides a summary of some observations I made of this set of speech episodes. With regard to the March 8 speech, Reagan appeared to both successfully drive media attention to himself and his subject through his use of dramatic heroic framing. Moreover, Reagan’s framing of the Soviet Union in terms of a heroic struggle against a malevolent force was largely adopted and disseminated, if not necessarily agreed with. The speech was also received in the Soviet Union as evidence of Reagan’s unpredictable hostility, buttressing existing fears that the president might commit the US to a nuclear attack without warning. Meanwhile, although Reagan’s March 23 speech did increase attention to the president and his proposals, it did not instantiate a frame which was favorable to the president. The popular and derisive label “Star Wars” ensured that the president’s proposal would retain a framing that suggested that the president was unrealistic and lacked a grasp of technological and political reality. Once again, however, the heroically-framed speech was received by the Soviet Union as more evidence that the US planned to mount an unprovoked attack.

Finally, the president’s early September response to the Soviet shutdown of KAL 007 could not be said to have independently driven media attention to the subject, as US media was already strongly interested in the story. Reagan’s heroic speech represented a response to public pressure more than an autonomous effort to affect media and public opinion. Rather than an attempt to persuade, Reagan’s use of heroic framing in this case demonstrated a version of the president as national interpreter, providing an authoritative reading of overwhelming and confusing international events. In that sense, Reagan’s frame was readily adopted by the media, which overwhelmingly agreed that the unique evil of the Soviets led them to perform this heinous action.<sup>94</sup> However, here yet again the Soviets read an especially strong signal about an

<sup>94</sup> In this case, Robert Entman (2004) argues that Reagan’s frame was easily picked up because it was so perfectly congruent with US cultural expectations of the Soviets, not necessarily because Reagan was especially convincing.

increased US commitment to conflict, to the extent that they then interpreted an annual military exercise as a possible cover for the beginning of major war.

In sum, the effectiveness of Reagan's heroic framing in raising media attention to his policy preferences – and in unintentionally signaling hostile intent to the Soviets – supports several of my hypotheses. Reagan's use of heroic framing in regard to defense issues demonstrated how presidents use heroic framing as a tool of public persuasion. Meanwhile, the fact that Reagan's choice of rhetoric raised Soviet fears, to the extent of nearly starting a nuclear war, affirms my hypothesis about the significance of heroic framing as a form of international signaling. As I observed in my statistical tests, presidential heroic framing is more likely both to have media effects and to signal genuine hostile intent to potential adversaries when interstate relations are tense. The case of 1983 provides an example of how these effects may play out in context.

## Chapter 8: Mission Accomplished? The War on Terror and the 2004 Election

The stark reality of 2001 is that America is now a battlefield, that the war has come home. And therefore, this Nation must also confront not only shadowy terrorist networks but the gravest danger in the war on terror: outlaw regimes arming to threaten the peace with weapons of mass destruction. After Secretary of State Powell's presentation to the United Nations Security Council, the world knows that Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction. (George W. Bush, Remarks at Carl Harrison High School in Kennesaw, Georgia, February 20, 2003)

The best evidence that I had seen was that Iraq indeed had weapons of mass destruction...It turns out that we were all wrong. (US weapons inspector David Kay, Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, January 24, 2004).

I had a meeting with a senior adviser to Bush...[he] said that guys like me were “in what we call the reality-based community,” which he defined as people who “believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality.” I nodded and murmured something about enlightenment principles and empiricism. He cut me off. “That's not the way the world really works anymore,” he continued. “We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality -- judiciously, as you will -- we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors... and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do.” (Suskind 2004)

Throughout this dissertation I have sought to characterize the manner in which presidents have used heroic framing and the effects this technique has had during the 1981-2005 period. I have assessed the strategic, instrumental effects of heroic framing, focusing particularly on the president's use of heroic framing in policy advocacy and in the reassurance of the domestic public in the face of upsetting information. However, I have so far touched only lightly on the moral dimension of heroic framing. Before closing my discussion, I wanted to address the moral issues implicated in presidential heroic framing.

A concern with the morality of heroic framing was the element which originally motivated my own interest in this subject, and this perspective has doubtlessly filtered into my work in various subtle ways. Of course, when one's subject is heroic framing – a rhetorical technique in which moral judgment figures so heavily – it may be impossible to avoid thinking about the moral dimension of the technique itself. Heroic framing implies a very simple sort of morality in which good and bad are clearly defined, separate, unmistakable and immutable. The situation which is heroically framed suggests a final accounting of the moral status of the involved parties; there is no room within the heroic narrative for a reappraisal of those moral assessments. This leads one to wonder: what happens when the heroic frame turns out to be highly inaccurate?

This is a particularly relevant question because the heroic frame is a type of story which is incapable of accurately representing real life. The heroic frame will always turn out to be wrong

in some dimensions. There is no possible situation in which the agents identified as ‘heroes’ can act in perfect accordance with the heroic imperative to harm only ‘villains.’ ‘Heroes’ are actors who use violence or power to inevitably, if unintentionally, harm people who aren’t ‘villains’ during the course of their mission. ‘Villains,’ meanwhile, are difficult to identify with certainty. It can be hard to know in advance, and perhaps ever, who belongs properly to the category of villain in the sense of having acted with enough autonomy and agency to be truly responsible for their own ‘villainous’ behavior. It is also difficult to identify villains in terms of the essentially villainous, or evil, nature of their behavior. People who are characterized as ‘villains’ within a heroic frame may have understandings of their own behavior which do not match our belief that they are simply choosing to be evil. ‘Victims’ are similarly problematic, as innocence can be just as complicated as villainy to identify in real life situations. For example, it does not make sense to assign all women to the ‘victim’ class when we acknowledge that women can also be combatants.

Most importantly, the achievement of a transcendent goal, that essentially heroic task, falls apart when the categories of heroes, villains and victims are no longer clear. The truly transcendent goal – which is something larger than simply achieving a good political outcome for a group of people – is the keystone of the heroic narrative. It provides the emotional logic for the hero’s willingness to sacrifice himself. Its importance underscores the teleological nature of the narrative, which depends on both a clear end state and a clear perspective from which we can judge whether or not the goal has been achieved. In the real, material world, this condition does not exist. While heroic stories exhibit the feature of a single narrator and a single ending, the real world shares neither of those qualities; because of this there can never be a universal heroic victory in the way that the heroic narrative promises. Each group victory is inevitably some non-villain’s loss. Time doesn’t stop with the end of any particular battle.

Because of these factors, the heroic frame does not provide an accurate model of real life. Now, the fact that the heroic frame does not accurately depict real life does not in and of itself give it any particular moral implication. It’s just a story and it’s fine when stories are “just pretend,” as my three-year-old would say. However, the heroic narrative is also a particularly significant story. It is a story with deep psychological attractiveness, as revealed by its near-universal cultural resonance. The depth of this resonance is apparent in the common presence of the heroic narrative at the heart of all major religious texts, national histories, and folktales (Campbell 2008). In a sense, the heroic narrative is a cohesive subtext lying at the heart of all of our major social communications about good and bad behavior. In its connection to these foundational texts of social morality, the heroic narrative provides a strong foundation for a persuasive argument about moral behavior. Thus, if a powerful speaker uses this story as a way to persuade his listeners to support a policy, the speaker is likely to gain some additional persuasive power due to the connection between his speech subject and its powerful subtext. Meanwhile, when a speaker uses the heroic narrative to persuade an audience based on a moral truth that does not accurately reflect material truth, this speaker is on potentially problematic grounds. The fact that the heroic narrative is emotionally resonant, but not factually accurate, leads the speaker who uses heroic imagery to bear some moral responsibility for his successful persuasion of listeners.

Because George W. Bush made such extravagant use of the heroic frame, it is impossible for the contemporary reader to think about heroic framing in a way that does not involve him.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, in a presidency filled with heroic framing, Bush's heroic framing in support of the Iraq War provided some of the most memorable, important examples of this technique. The Iraq War provided such a memorable case precisely because it was such a problematic subject for heroic framing. Despite the fact that existing information about Iraq was ambiguous, Bush heroically framed the need for a US-led war. He argued that America was being "called to defend the safety of our people and the hopes of all mankind" by countering the threat posed by the villainous Saddam Hussein and his possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) (Bush 2003b). Later, investigators determined that Bush's case for war was factually unfounded. This expert determination implied that the heroic frame Bush had used to promote the war was inaccurate. What are the consequences of this particular inaccuracy? And if all heroic frames are ultimately inaccurate representations of reality, what might we consider to be the consequences of this inevitable inaccuracy? In this chapter, I will first consider some more general moral consequences of the inaccuracy of the heroic frame. A review of political theory suggests some of the ways that we might conceptualize this moral responsibility.

Less normatively, I also wish to investigate the material consequences of Bush's inaccurate framing. What cost, if any, do we expect the domestic public to impose on Bush after the discovery that the heroic frame was inaccurate? What kind of costs might be incurred in terms of reduced support for Bush's Iraq War policy? The politically charged issue of whether or not Bush lied about his case for the Iraq War – and, if so, what the consequences both were and should be – remains unresolved. However, it is an issue which has also attracted substantial popular study and writing. For that reason, I am able to look directly at the relationship between Bush's speeches about Iraq and public opinion without needing to focus primarily on the intervening variable of media attention.

I will look at Bush's use of the heroic frame in connection with the war in Iraq over time with a focus on two main periods. First, I will look at the period immediately following the September 11 attacks. During this threatening time, my theory of the two uses of heroic framing predicts that the US public would have sought an increase in presidential heroic framing. Furthermore, the literature on authoritarianism which I reviewed in Chapter 2 suggests that, during a period of heightened threat, both the public as a whole and especially people with tendencies towards authoritarianism would find presidential heroic framing strongly appealing. Bush's critical rhetorical move during this time was to submerge the ceremonial heroic framing of 9/11 within a persuasive heroic framing aimed at developing support for a large-scale program called the War on Terror. This linking of public acceptance of the ceremonial frame for 9/11 with a heroically-framed War on Terror then allowed Bush to draw on this conjoined

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<sup>95</sup> A variety of books treat the extremity of Bush's rhetoric. One good example of this group is Peter Singer's *The President of Good and Evil* (2004).

ceremonial/persuasive heroic frame to create support for “lower-order” policies, of which the most notable was the War in Iraq.<sup>96</sup>

After exploring the development of these frames and looking at the initial public response to them, I sought to discover how the heavy use of heroic framing might affect the president politically over the long term. I was particularly interested in trends during the presidential election year of 2004. This presidential election represented the US electorate’s opportunity to reward or punish Bush for his first term performance. Most intriguingly, not only was 2004 a test for American voters’ global assessment of the president, but it was also a year in which many of the connections between Bush’s heroic narrative and war’s reality were severed. Before the elections were held, Americans witnessed the publication of photos depicting Americans abusing Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison, the televised killings of American contractors and, most critically, the report by weapons investigators that the US rationale for war – Iraq’s possession of WMD – was false.

Unexpectedly, what I discovered when looking at Bush’s speech is that he appeared to have dramatically increased rather than decreased his use of heroic framing in connection with Iraq during the late summer and early fall of 2004. Rather than retract the earlier, inaccurate heroic frame, Bush seems to have worked to reinforce the heroic image of the conflict. While this particular increase in heroic framing did not necessarily increase the number of New York Times articles devoted to Iraq (as I have demonstrated can be an effect of presidential heroic framing during pre-conflict periods), it did correspond with a brief reversal of the trend in falling public support for the Iraq War. The particular timing of this reversal came at a crucial pre-election moment when Bush had been sliding downward in public approval. I argue that the increase in support for the Iraq War which Bush achieved through his revised heroic frame helped to buttress his general support in time for the presidential election.

This connection between heroic framing and increased public approval would seem to contradict my earlier findings on the subject. In Chapter 3, when I examined heightened heroic framing in annual State of the Union addresses I found no evidence that the presidential use of heroic framing increased general presidential popularity. However, specific policy support for the Iraq war was especially consequential for Bush’s general support in the fall of 2004. Bush was highly identified with the controversial war, which at that point had been going on for over a year and a half. Throughout the summer of 2004, Bush’s public approval ratings in Gallup polls hovered right around 50%. Meanwhile, support for the Iraq war had been falling steadily since the war’s inception in March 2003. This slide in presidential popularity was neither an unexpected nor unusual outcome for a long-term, high-casualty military conflict. Summarizing

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<sup>96</sup> In this perspective I concur fully with Ronald Krebs and Jennifer Lobasz (2007), who argued that the “hegemonic” frame of the War on Terror offered Bush a strong source of persuasive power. However, I disagree with their general characterization of presidential rhetoric on the War on Terror as belonging to the class of epideictic rhetoric. Its purpose was not primarily ceremonial, but persuasive. Therefore, I feel it is more useful to consider it to be an instance of symboletic rhetoric, with its power derived from the persuasive function of the heroic frame.



the findings of the scholarly literature on the relationship between public opinion and casualties, Scott Gartner (2008) notes:

The human costs of war affect a wide range of domestic political phenomena. Increasing casualties lead to both decreased national support...and individual approval...of a war and its leaders. Casualties influence elections...and they affect leader tenure more broadly (95).

By the summer of 2004, the death toll among American soldiers approached 1000 (CNN 2004). In line with the expectations of the war and public opinion literature, domestic support for both the war and the wartime leader had been declining in a nearly linear fashion. If this relationship had continued to hold, Bush's approval ratings would have been predicted to fall well below 50% by November.

Meanwhile, Bush may have been able to alter this negative approval trend by deliberately shoring up support for his Iraq policy. Since the original rationale for going to war had been undermined by the US failure to find WMD in Iraq, one might think that this would be a challenging thing for him to achieve. Nonetheless, Bush made Iraq a central part of his re-election campaign. In August, September and October of 2004, he made an enormous number of speeches mentioning both Iraq and WMD, to the extent that by the end of the period he mentioned Iraq in an average of three speeches per day. Most critically, in these campaign speeches he did not falter in his heroic justification for War in Iraq. Instead, he continued to argue for the heroic qualities of the Iraq mission by reinforcing its subordinate position to the highly heroic War on Terror. Locating the War on Iraq within the overarching heroic narrative of the War on Terror, Bush implicitly argued that the heroic narrative offered a better and truer understanding of Iraq than did the small, fact-based considerations of the "reality-based community" (Suskind 2004). Iraq no longer merited a careful consideration of specific facts, since it represented an important part of a transcendent moral struggle.

While support for the Iraq War had been falling with great regularity throughout 2004, a variety of polls in September demonstrate that the trends reversed themselves, for a short time, with a greater number of respondents endorsing Bush's management of the war and holding the opinion that the Iraq War was not a mistake. This upward shift in support for the Iraq War was not mirrored in a similar upward swing in general presidential support. However, the downward trend in presidential support ended during this period, remaining stable right around 50% through the end of the election period. Moreover, beginning in late August, Bush began outcompeting Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry in pre-election polls. Bush's campaign team was simultaneously using a variety of campaign techniques to help increase the president's electoral chances, including a discrediting of Kerry's own military heroic narrative. Nonetheless, if public positivity towards the Iraq War had an effect on presidential vote choice, then Bush's successful use of heroic framing of the Iraq War may have helped him – at least temporarily – reconnect with some wavering war supporters who would vote in his favor.

## The Moral Implications of Heroic Framing

Before looking at the specific consequences of Bush's inaccurate framing, I want to look at the more general moral implications of the heroic frame. The literature I reviewed in Chapter 2 concerned the immediate kinds of relationships that may cause a leader to use heroic framing or which may result from a leader's use of heroic framing. However, there is also a substantial literature in political theory which examines the larger and more systemic moral implications of leaders' rhetoric. Several common themes run through feminist and critical scholarship about state-based heroic narratives. These scholars tend to share a skepticism towards the normative status of the hero and the identity of the "helpless" endangered community; they question the construction of crises which require heroic action as well as the very notion of being "saved" from those crises. In general, feminist and critical scholars often seek to unpack the effects of official mythologies (C. Weber 2004) and narratives (Bhabha 1990), and frequently use historical, discourse analytic and deconstructionist methodologies to show how leaders use the heroic image to manipulate state citizens into giving up rights, to reinforce gender hierarchy, and to disguise and legitimize state-endorsed killing.

Critical scholars in international relations have consistently worked to point out the morally problematic nature of grand meta-narratives in the analysis of political life (C Weber 2004). Critical theory, which originated in the Frankfurt School's academic response to Fascism, tends to apply special scrutiny to official claims about the heroic nature of the state or its agents. In the context of political life, critical theorists point out how hegemonic groups and institutions regularly silence non-hegemonic groups by denying the legitimacy of their perspectives. Presidential heroic narratives are particularly likely to erase alternate perspectives. In its simplification of complex stories about situations, the heroic narrative evokes an authoritarian clarity about the relative value of communities, individuals, and goals. Critical scholars anticipate this by finding that in general, unambivalent statements of truth about social outcomes suggest a number of perspectives are being obscured. RBJ Walker (1993) examines heroic national myths of origin as an example of this, pointing out that:

All those stories about a move from backward to advanced, from passionate to rational, from barbarism to enlightenment – harbour an embarrassment of subtexts (ethnocentrism, racism, the arrogance of empires, the butchery of wars and concentration camps) and a realisation that these stories still inform the most basic categories through which we understand and act in the world. (28)

These subtexts are particularly important to examine where they exist within the popular public speech of powerful leaders. Michael Rogin (1987) examined the dominant myths animating the speech of Ronald Reagan and found that Reagan's "political demonology" demonstrated a consistent theme of the fear of subversion. Looking at Reagan, Rogin emphasized the significance of the key relationship between movies and political speech. While "the political hero represents one fulfillment of countersubversion in modern America," Rogin reminded, "movies make political demonology visible in widely popular and influential forms. They not only have a power normally denied the word alone; they also show us what we are talking

about.” Rogin focused especially on the importance of political speech about villains, which stressed the uncertainty of the hero’s success. Rogin found that Reagan’s demonology legitimized increased domestic social surveillance, since villains could live literally anywhere.

Post 9/11, many other scholars have pointed out how the political use of heroic themes or themes closely related to the heroic model allow the government to legitimize reductions in individual rights (Anker 2005, Kuypers 2006, Lustick 2006, Kelley 2007, Ivie 2007). Elisabeth Anker, (2007) for example, describes the shift in post-9/11 rhetoric in terms of a renewed emphasis on melodrama. Anker’s analysis of the role of melodrama in American political speech, in which the state narrative is simultaneously “about heroism, about strength, about the capacity to respond and the promise to overcome” and yet which also identifies the state as an innocent, sullied victim, follows Rogin in noting that the fear of intimate violation produces a public willingness to give up individual civic rights in the interest of achieving national retribution. Robert Ivie (2007) investigates themes of holiness and damnation in Bush’s post-9/11 rhetoric. Ivie argues that Bush describes foreign policy as a morality play, in which the overthrow of a Satanic opponent represents our opportunity to achieve salvation. Ivie sees this logic of this rhetorical technique as a way of locking the nation into perpetual cycles of violent foreign policy.

While critical scholars have focused on the speech of individual leaders, feminist scholars have often looked how major social institutions reinforce gender-based power hierarchies. The institution of war is often an interesting institution for feminist analysis, and the official use of heroic imagery is thus of interest to many feminist scholars since the heroic frame relies heavily on images of war. Heroic framing is very often used by political leaders in the course of providing a moral justification for violence. Heroes are expected to move towards conflict, even when doing so exposes them personally to danger, in order to protect victims who are characterized by their passive inability to protect themselves. The hero’s use of violence is presented as necessary since without it, villains are expected to continue to harm others in their pursuit of selfish gain.

Feminists have observed that the identification of the warrior role with men and masculinity, and the identification of men and masculinity with warrior identity, are processes which produce certain regular effects both for social images of heroic warriors and for social images of men. Jean Bethke Elshtain's *Women and War* (1995) provided one classic distillation of war and gender identity:

We in the West are the heirs of a tradition that assumes an affinity between women and peace, between men and war, a tradition that consists of culturally constructed and transmitted myths and memories. Thus, in time of war, real men and women...take on, in cultural memory and narrative, the personas of Just Warriors and Beautiful Souls. Man construed as violent, whether eagerly and inevitably or reluctantly and tragically; women as nonviolent, offering succor and compassion: these tropes on the social identities of men and women, past and present, do not denote what men and women really are in time of war, but function instead to re-create and secure women's location as noncombatants and men's as warriors (4).

This dichotomy maps neatly onto the division between heroes and the community in need of saving. In addition to describing the cultural association of maleness, however, this dichotomy reveals the binary, mutually-exclusive nature of the hero/community distinction. Heroes, in this context, are male not only because they are certain things – bellicose, courageous, determined – but also because they are not other things – peace-loving, compassionate, changeable.

Wendy Brown (1988) explored several ways in which this dichotomy between active, heroic ‘male’ principles and passive, weak ‘female’ principles have been expressed in classical political thought. Beginning with an exploration of the philosophical division created by Greek scholars between “the good life” and “mere life,” Brown noted a division between a realm of transcendence and immortality and the realm of “biological life processes” and “innate human urges” (39). While physical, corporeal activity was prized, it was the physicality of the super-human, put outside of the realm of ordinary physicality by its perfection and, further, it was used in competition to defeat others. This connection between a transcendent form of physicality and conflict epitomizes the heroic character, neatly summarized in the Greek concept of *arete*, for which the only real test was victory in battle:

a victory which was not merely the physical conquest of an enemy, but the proof of hardwon arete...The hero's whole life and effort are a race for the first prize, an unceasing strife for supremacy over his peers. (59)

*Arete* suggests the path to the dream of immortality; the ability to forever leave behind “mere life” and emerge, through fame and honor, into the realm of legend. Through an exercise of “manly virtue,” the hero separates himself permanently from the world of base biology that belongs to the unnamed, unremembered, feminized populace. This hierarchy separates the “good life,” which is worthy of becoming immortalized through memorials, from *actual* life, which is embedded in the physical actions of life-making and life-keeping. The philosophical outcome of the heroic dream of *arete* is the celebration of physical self-sacrifice and emotional distance from a multi-gendered, multi-aged community.

Similarly, international relations scholar J. Ann Tickner (1992) identified the “manly ideal” which resides within purportedly neutral images of political life: in particular, the valuation of toughness, courage, power, and autonomy (6). Tickner memorably examined several foundational myths of international relations, demonstrating how simplified, apparently neutral stories used for rhetorical purposes exhibit meaningfully regular patterns in what they omit. In the case of the state of nature metaphor often cited from Hobbes' *Leviathan*, Tickner notes that Hobbes’ theorized war of universal anarchy could be applicable only to adult males, “for if life was to go on for more than one generation in the state of nature, women must have been involved in activities such as reproduction and child rearing rather than warfare” (46).

By identifying these qualities as reflections of “hegemonic masculinity,” Tickner observed how the elevation of hegemonically masculine ideals in the political realm reinforces the dichotomy between those ideals and individuals who can convincingly perform them, and lowers the status of individuals who can't or don't choose to.

Hegemonic masculinity is sustained through its opposition to various subordinated and devalued masculinities, such as homosexuality, and, more important, through its relation to various devalued femininities. Socially constructed gender differences are based on socially sanctioned, unequal relationships between men and women that reinforce compliance with men's stated superiority. Nowhere in the public realm are these stereotypical gender images more apparent than in the realm of international politics, where the characteristics associated with hegemonic masculinity are projected onto the behavior of states whose success as international actors are measured in terms of their power capabilities and capacity for their self-help and autonomy. (6-7)

Tickner's description of hegemonic masculinity helps illuminate the consequences of the heroic frame when used in the foreign policy context. The careful separation of hero and victim, "good" and "bad" forms of maleness echo the ethnocentric, eliminationist or colonialist perspective on foreign difference.

Most notably, however, Tickner problematized the classical and neo-realist assumption of anarchy as the regular condition of the international system. The notion that everything within the state represents "order" and everything outside of the state represents "anarchy" is a form of binary structure that does not accord with actual, human relationships of these places. In particular, women experience a great deal of violence within the state and even within their homes. As a result, she observes that some feminists do not see any legitimate distinction between interstate violence and intrastate violence, but instead see all violence as being interrelated, and also identify the ideological linkage between sexism and militarism to be an important motivating force for all of it (30). Given this perspective, state claims of "heroism" are particularly suspect. The heroic narrative glorifies and legitimizes violence which will inevitably be visited on people who are not really villains. Moreover, while a man might be identified as a "hero" in war, if he uses violence against members of his home community, what is his ontological status?

Moreover, Tickner's isolation of the binary of ordered "homeland" and anarchic international system is important to explore in the context of the heroic narrative because it reinforces the notion of permanent external threat and permanent internal harmony. The permanently anarchic world reflects the inevitability of violence that comes from the stark moral absolutes of heroic framing. Under the heroic frame, the moral value of their actors cannot change – villains can't become less bad, nor heroes less than honorable. This immutability locks in expectations of absolute, all-or-nothing outcomes to conflicts and makes negotiation or compromise seem unviable. Another important implication of this set of principles is the expectation of casualties, possibly on both sides. The villain must be put to death, while self-sacrificing heroes and helpless victims are both known to be at an increased risk of being subject to violence from villains.

## The Heroic Class: the Military and the Heroic Image

Another implication of the state of constant threat implied by anarchy is the need for a category of constant heroes – a permanent standing army – as well as the concomitant need to physically and mentally prepare a class of individuals to staff that army. In this permanent state of external threat, the heroic ideal provides an aspirational image that is an essential aspect of military socialization. Though the heroic image is only one tool in the military recruiter's toolbox, relying on the heroic warrior identity is a necessity for military recruiters. The heroic ideal both creates a positive external image for the military and also provides a template for appropriate military behavior. However, the heroic ideal is especially useful for inculcating the difficult concept of self-sacrifice on behalf of the state. While the concept of the hero does invoke strength, courage, determination, virtue and skill in connection with the idea of war, more than anything it relies on the notion of sacrifice: separation from family and friends, physical deprivation and – perpetually in the background – the hero's willingness to be killed in pursuit of his noble goal.

Creating an ideology around the notion of heroic self-sacrifice is necessary because the willingness to sacrifice oneself on behalf of a large and depersonalized group of people is not something found innately. People do not require social training to accept the notion of self-defense because it is a biological reflex. Similarly, people's willingness to physically defend their loved ones relies on easily accessible psychological behaviors.<sup>97</sup> However, getting potential soldiers to die for an entire country or, more specifically, for a particular policy constructed by the leaders of a country, represents a different problem. The glorification of sacrifice thus represents the production of a truly complex social concept. Since self-sacrifice for abstract ideals represents an illogical behavior from the vantage point of the individual, intense social pressure is necessary; the desire to participate in war, without social pressure, is likely to be exceedingly weak. Joshua Goldstein (2003), after disproving the notion that men are "naturally" predisposed to war,<sup>98</sup> considers the enormity of the task presented to military organizers:

Consider the problem: with rare exceptions – people who might be considered mentally ill in another context – soldiers who participate in combat find it extremely unnatural and horrible. Any sane person, male or female, who is surrounded by the terrifying and surreal sights and sounds of battle, instinctually wants to run away, or hunker down and freeze up, and certainly not to charge into even greater danger to kill and maim other people. Contrary to the idea that war thrills men, expresses innate masculinity, or gives men a

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<sup>97</sup> This willingness to defend the close social group is also an important tendency exploited by military organizations through efforts to enhance "cohesion" – the "bonding together of [military] members in such a way as to sustain their will and commitment to each other" (Henderson 1985, 4)

<sup>98</sup> Specifically, Goldstein examines the possibility of genetic, hormonal, and physical hypotheses to explain the universal tendency to exclude women from combat. He determines that none of these explanations is sufficient to explaining the extremity of the outcome.



fulfilling occupation, all evidence indicates that war is something that societies impose on men, who most often need to be dragged kicking and screaming into it, constantly brainwashed and disciplined once there, and rewarded and honored afterwards. (253)

The will to self-sacrifice is created by enhancing the sense of social reward for participating in military combat and increasing the sense of social shame around refusing to participate in combat. The rewarding of soldiers willing to sacrifice themselves is revealed in the very frequent use of the word “hero” to refer to people who die while employed as soldiers. The reward for self-sacrifice is also conditioned on the military's reification of hierarchies that position soldiers as morally superior to civilians; the recruit's reward for the accepting increase risk of death is that he is granted access to a morally superior social class. Military training is thus recast as something beyond an opportunity to gain a professional skill-set. Rather, it is a metamorphosis, an induction into a super-human (and, traditionally, hyper-masculinized) new body. Recognizing this, Weber (1978) identified the process of educating warriors as a form of magical charismatic endowment, a form of rebirth:

at the root of the oldest and most universally diffused magical system of education is the animistic assumption that...heroism rests on a charisma which must be aroused, tested and instilled into the hero by magical manipulations. In this way, therefore, the warrior is reborn into heroism. Charismatic education in this sense, with its novitiates, trials of courage, tortures, gradations of holiness and honor, initiation of youths, and preparation for battle, is an almost universal institution of all societies which have experienced warfare (458.)

Enhancing the difference of the person's new identity as soldier, the military training which effects this rebirth is notorious for being physically and emotionally difficult. This different world in which extreme physical sacrifice is a rewarded activity prepares soldiers for self-sacrifice in combat.

At the same time that military organizations celebrate soldiers as “heroes,” they work similarly to shame non-soldiers through frequent references to the costs of non-hegemonic masculinity. Advertisements for military recruitment tell men who refuse to become soldiers to fear sexual rejection by women for being insufficiently masculine (Goldstein 2003). Elshain (1987) examines historical and legendary examples of women shame men into go to war, including examples from Greek battles in which mothers would kill sons accused of cowardly behavior in war. In his fictionalized account of participating in the Vietnam War, Tim O'Brien (1990) provides an eloquent description of the effects of military-enabled social shaming of the men who refuse to fight:

All those eyes on me – the town, the whole universe– and I couldn't risk the embarrassment. It was as if there were an audience to my life, that swirl of faces along the river, and in my head I could hear people screaming at me. Traitor! they yelled. Turncoat! Pussy! I felt myself blush. I couldn't tolerate it. I couldn't endure the mockery, or the

disgrace, or the patriotic ridicule...I couldn't make myself be brave. It had nothing to do with morality. Embarrassment, that's all it was.

And right then I submitted.

I would go to war – I would kill and maybe die – because I was embarrassed not to. That was the sad thing. And so I sat in the bow of the boat and cried. (59)

At the same time that military recruitment agents work to identify masculinity with heroism and military membership, the parallel idealization of feminine behavior as passive, supportive and defenseless provides the basis for images of communities in need of the hero's intervention. Feminists demonstrate how violence against women abruptly becomes politically salient when it occurs in the context of an already attractive military intervention. By asserting that an intervention is occurring on behalf of helpless women, the heroic implication of the mission – its black-and-white moral necessity – becomes clear. Cynthia Weber (2005), in describing the US administration's appropriation of the vehicle of the film *Kandahar* as a pro-war publicity device, characterizes the sudden development of an American interest in the status of Afghani women:

The US response to 9/11...was aggressive and vengeful but not necessarily moral. Posing convincingly as a nation of do-gooders remained a problem. How could this extensive bombing campaign that disrupted and destroyed the lives of so many Afghans be seen as doing any good?...In November 2001, George W. Bush and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair rejustified the war in humanitarian terms, and they paraded their wives Laura Bush and Cherie Blair before the press as 'universal sisters/women' to argue the case for Afghan women...Laura Bush told Americans.. "Civilised people throughout the world are speaking out in horror -- not only because our hearts break for the women and children in Afghanistan, but also because in Afghanistan we see the world the terrorists would like to impose on the rest of us...Fighting brutality against women and children is not the expression of a specific culture; it is the acceptance of our common humanity." (6)

Ironically, the pervasive heroic myth of "saving" a helpless community, gendered as a place that is filled with women and incomplete men (either on the basis of age or infirmity), elides the reality that war has become significantly more deadly for civilians over the last century (Tickner 2001). While the idealized heroic narrative posits clear heroes, clear villains, and a victimized community clearly in need of heroic rescue, the historical reality of who harms and who is harmed never falls clearly along those lines.

#### The Development of the Heroic Narrative: Fighting the Axis of Evil

The pitfalls of inaccurate heroic framing, while perhaps often overlooked by official speakers, seemed particularly distant in 2001. If the domestic public typically seeks heroic

framing as a way to mitigate a sense of threat, the extreme sense of threat produced by the September 11 represented an instance where the public would surely seek that comfort. George W. Bush unquestionably rose to that need. Despite a fairly average rhetorical performance to that point, Bush adopted a dramatically altered rhetorical style in the period following the September attacks (Bligh et al 2004). As my charts in Chapter 3 demonstrated, the president's average use of heroic rhetoric skyrocketed in the period following the attack. The president's initial heroic framings concerned the September 11 attacks themselves, and combined a sense of sorrow with a sense of heroic purpose.<sup>99</sup> Once more, this epideictic response to an upsetting public event provided a measure of reassurance to an extremely threatened public.

However, just as I explored in Reagan's response to the KAL shootdown in 1983, the heroic frame which was created for the purpose of reassurance could be used by the speaker to play multiple roles. In the weeks following the September 11 attacks, Bush's effusive ceremonial heroic framing segued into a series of remarkable examples of persuasive heroic framing. The extremity of the feelings of threat allowed Bush to argue for an enormous policy change, one appropriately scaled to the domestic sense of fear and anger. Bush's proposed response was a war within a war, with the promise of more wars to come, until fear, or "terror" itself, was eradicated.

In the week after the September 11 attacks, Bush simultaneously introduced the War on Afghanistan and the War on Terror. The War on Afghanistan was a traditional war, while the War on Terror was to be "a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen" (Bush 2001). The "War on Terror," initially called the "War on Terrorism," represented an extraordinarily powerful rhetorical and political device.<sup>100</sup> It yoked together symbolic and concrete elements in a way which made it the very essence of heroic endeavor. As a "war" which was to provide an overall policy direction to a series of military and political actions, it mirrored previous large, morals-driven US campaigns like the War on Drugs, the War on Crime, and the War on Poverty. These large campaigns all represent strategic, politically-useful fusions of symbolic and concrete action. They create a sense of political unity based on broad social moral agreement – such as a

<sup>99</sup> The evolution of the president's framing over the first days after the attacks provide an interesting study in themselves. In looking at many of his initial speeches, there is a balance between heroic framing and references to his sadness, to his gratefulness for help, and to the love and kindness evident in the scale of voluntary contributions.

<sup>100</sup> Bush initially labeled the overarching program the "War on Terrorism," although this phrase quickly dropped out of regular use and the phrase "War on Terror" gained traction as a rhetorical tool. The following chart demonstrates the number of times Bush used each phrase in public speeches during the first five years of his tenure:

	"War on Terrorism"	"War on Terror"
2001	38	21
2002	44	223
2003	29	391
2004	27	791
2005	10	406

general condemnation of “crime” or “drugs” – which then provides a foundation for a set of discrete policy actions. For policymakers, one major political benefit of the symbolic/concrete fusion effected by the moral “Wars on” framework is that each new policy proposed under its auspices automatically enjoys an initially positive moral framing, regardless of how controversial it might be without that framing. These discrete policies can all be rhetorically linked back to the overall aim of “progress” in the larger symbolic battle (i.e., victory over crime, victory over drugs.) While the policies might at the same time have a range of immediate, concrete effects which are in themselves damaging or controversial, the overarching umbrella of that initial broad moral agreement provides their supporters political cover. In other words, the “wars on” model acts as a form of heroic narrative: the law enforcement agents are heroes; shadowy, unspecified evildoers are the villains; and the everyday American – and particularly American women and children – are the victims to be saved. The transcendental, promised goal of the hero’s dangerous work is the eradication of the form of evil in question. This transcendental, overwhelming good of the heroes’ goal renders the concrete problems which may be caused by individual policies insignificant in comparison.

In its name, the War on Terror – and later, the Global War on Terror – provided an intensification of the symbolic significance of this “Wars on” model. The “War on Terror” took the “Wars on” model a step further by declaring war on an *emotion*. Quixotically, in its name the War on Terror projects a victory over the feeling of fear itself. Bush initiated this framing most notably on September 20, 2001, when describing the outcome of the War on Terror – divinely preordained in the logic of the heroic narrative:

The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them (Bush 2001).

Through his articulation of the War on Terror, Bush linked US policy as strongly as it ever had been linked to the heroic narrative and in so doing further reinforced the already substantial political power of the “wars on” model.<sup>101</sup> By identifying the enemy as “terror,” Bush described the US target in terms of the least controversial, most-agreed-upon essence of villainy: that emotion of extreme fear and upset which villains cause. Helpfully, this essence of villainy is also the antithesis of heroism, since the hero is the character who himself overcomes the power of fear in accepting the call to sacrifice himself for the common good. In the logic of the heroic framing of the “War on Terror,” male and militarized members of the US (and any other population willing to align itself with freedom, justice and God) became the heroes called forth by this undisputable villain, while the routinized description of violence against helpless women and children metaphorically subsumed those groups into the category of victims.

Not long after the beginning of the War in Afghanistan, Bush began to develop another major theme in the War on Terror. While he had discussed making war against Saddam Hussein

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<sup>101</sup> See Krebs and Lobasz 2007, Powers 2007 and Kuypers 2006 for a more detailed discussion of the political power of the War on Terror frame.

for his development of WMD much earlier in his presidency,<sup>102</sup> Bush now began to tie the threat posed by Iraq to the vast and underspecified evil of terrorism. Ronald Krebs and Jennifer Lobasz (2007) described how this task was made easier by the fact that both Clinton and George H.W. Bush had previously established a rhetorical frame linking Saddam Hussein with Hitler, the most popular modern icon of political evil.

However, even before Bush focused particularly on Iraq itself, he began to focus on the specific threat of WMD by speaking more frequently in heroic terms about the danger they posed. It was not an obvious connection, since the 9/11 attacks were achieved with everyday civilian objects and not with WMD, but it became possible to link the two by tying them both to the emotionally resonant, but factually unspecific, heroic narrative of the War on Terror. In November 2001, Bush went before the United Nations and recounting of the effects of the September 11 attacks, using an appropriate ceremonial heroic frame in that telling. Then, he used the same heroic language to make an argument about the threat posed by WMD:

Every...country is a potential target. And all the world faces the most horrifying prospect of all: These same terrorists are searching for weapons of mass destruction, the tools to turn their hatred into holocaust. They can be expected to use chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons the moment they are capable of doing so. No hint of conscience would prevent it. This threat cannot be ignored. This threat cannot be appeased. Civilization, itself, the civilization we share, is threatened. History will record our response and judge or justify every nation in this hall. The civilized world is now responding. We act to defend ourselves and deliver our children from a future of fear. We choose the dignity of life over a culture of death. We choose lawful change and civil disagreement over coercion, subversion, and chaos. These commitments--hope and order, law and life--unite people across cultures and continents. Upon these commitments depend all peace and progress. For these commitments, we are determined to fight (Bush 2001a).

After instantiating the importance of WMD as an aspect of the War on Terror, Bush used WMD to reframe Iraq as an appropriate battlefield within the War on Terror. On January 29, 2002, Bush gave the annual State of the Union address. This speech was a masterwork of emotional evocativeness. Bush began with a triumphant account of the consequences of victory in Afghanistan and then recounted individual stories of regular American parents and children killed on September 11. He next moved to refocus his speech on the loss of Iraqi parents and children to their own leader's use of WMD:

Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax and nerve gas and nuclear weapons for over a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens, leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections, then kicked out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world.

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<sup>102</sup> See, for example, Bush's press conference of February 22, 2001 (Bush 2001b).

States like these and their terrorist allies constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic (Bush 2002).

Beneath the auspices of the War on Terror program, Bush could effect a strong identification between the September 11 attacks and the attacks that Saddam Hussein was certain to enable in the immediate future. In this speech, the concept of the War on Terror was also fleshed out more concretely, to the extent of existing within a military alliance form. This move allowed it to have even greater policy reference, since the overall “evil” that America had been called to fight was now alleged to have a terrestrial coordination structure. In other words, the merging of the expression “axis of evil” with a reference to an ‘alliance’ between North Korea, Iran, Iraq, and terrorist groups allowed Bush to take yet one more important step further in bridging the rhetorical and the factual. It left audiences with a sense of confusion between the probably not real (“axis of evil”) and the probably real (some states connected with some terrorist groups.)

Journalists were receptive, if cautious. In particular, Bush’s use of strong heroic imagery did not go unnoticed. Under a column headline “Hype and Glory,” USA Today editorialist Walter Shapiro noted that by introducing the phrase “axis of evil” to describe Iraq, Iran and North Korea, “Bush was clearly upping the ante in the war on terror. Regarding Iraq in particular, those words clearly signal that Bush has moved a step closer to nailing up a “Wanted: Dead or Alive” poster with Saddam’s picture on it” (2002). Regardless of the media response, the public seemed to be in favor of Bush’s perspective on Iraq. Polls registered extremely high interest in military action against Iraq even before Bush’s State of the Union address. ABC News polls found in November 2001 that 78% of those surveyed favored US military action to force Saddam Hussein from power and in December 2001, 72% still favored it. Meanwhile, Bush’s address may not have changed the minds of those who were not already in favor, as 71% of those surveyed in January 2002 and 72% in March 2002 remained in favor of military action against Iraq (ABC News 2002).<sup>103</sup>

Bush maintained a substantial focus on WMD through the summer of 2002. Tracking the frequency and level of heroic rhetoric in speeches in which Bush mentioned WMD demonstrates his increasing attention over time. As it is also relevant to consider his attention to WMD relative to his attention to Iraq, I tracked the president’s speeches and heroic rhetoric in connection with Iraq as well. Figure 8.1 represents the trend in the average daily frequency with which Bush mentioned WMD and Iraq between January 2001 and August 2002. Figure 8.2 describes this trend in terms of the amount of heroic rhetoric Bush used while discussing WMD or Iraq. The higher peaks of Figure 8.2 demonstrate Bush’s consistent use of heroic rhetoric in connection with WMD during this period.

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<sup>103</sup> All polls are available within the Iraq section of the Polling Report website, <http://www.pollingreport.com/iraq.htm>.



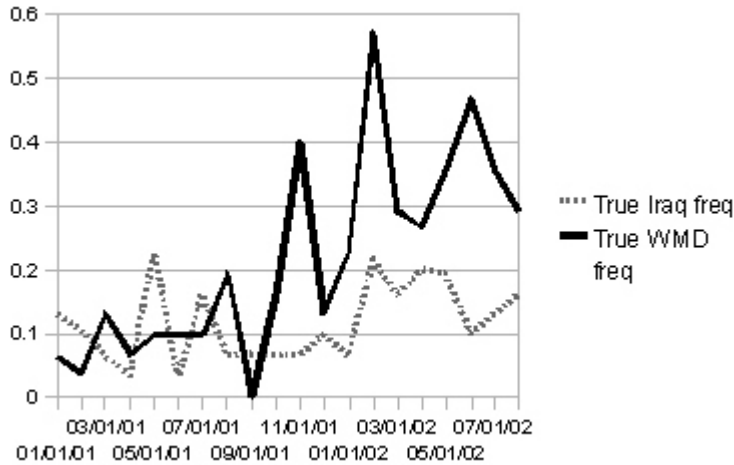


Figure 8.1

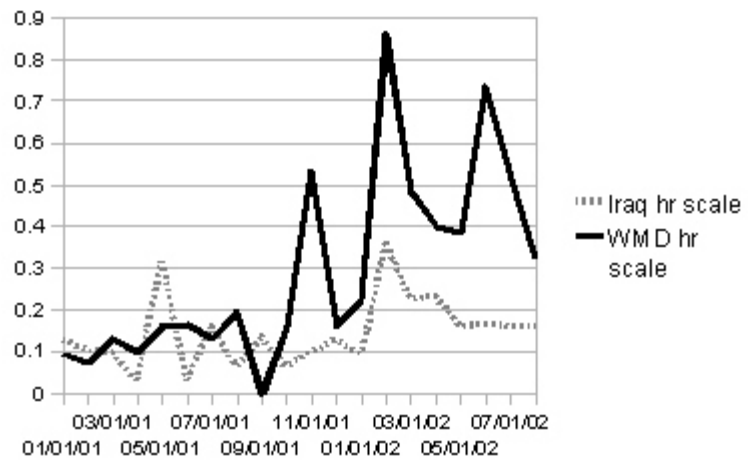


Figure 8.2

As one can observe from Bush’s relatively low level of attention to Iraq through the summer of 2002, Bush did not begin to concentrate on raising public support for a war in Iraq until September. Helpfully, we know that September 2002 was in fact the intentional beginning of Bush’s effort to develop public support for the war since White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card said as much when he explained that “from a marketing point of view, you don’t introduce new products in August” (New York Times 2002a). The dramatic increase in Bush’s speech about Iraq and use of heroic framing in connection with Iraq clearly matches Card’s description of the administration’s plans (Figure 8.3). By the fall of 2002, Bush’s focus on Iraq was as high as it would be at any point from the beginning to his presidency through the end of major combat operations in Iraq in May 2003. Furthermore, both the frequency of his speech and his use of heroic rhetoric in connection with Iraq were higher in the fall of 2002 than they were in the

period immediately preceding the actual invasion, suggesting that the speech was intended more for domestic persuasion than for signaling.<sup>104</sup>

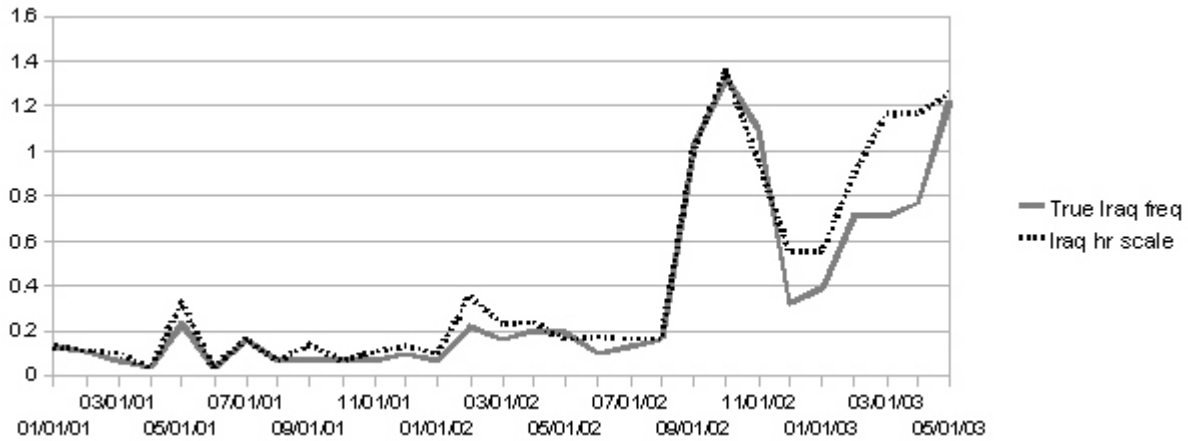


Figure 8.3

On September 12, 2002, Bush laid out his case for war against Iraq in a speech at the UN. Bush immediately noted the significance of the day he chose for the speech, “one year and one day after a terrorist attack brought grief to my country,” praised the work of the UN, and then again highlighted the link between terrorism and Iraq as the world’s most important problem:

Our greatest fear is that terrorists will find a shortcut to their mad ambitions when an outlaw regime supplies them with the technologies to kill on a massive scale. In one place - in one regime - we find all these dangers in their most lethal and aggressive forms, exactly the kind of aggressive threat the United Nations was born to confront (Bush 2002a).

Bush’s speech did not ultimately lead the United Nations to support military action. However, it did successfully galvanize the domestic public. Several polling organizations conducted polls immediately before and after Bush’s September 12 speech. These polls

<sup>104</sup> Meanwhile, although Bush made more speeches mentioning Iraq in September and October 2002 than during the immediate pre-war period in February and March 2003, the difference was less marked between the two periods when considering the relative amount of heroic rhetoric. Bush’s use of heroic rhetoric rose substantially relative to the frequency of his speeches in the pre-war period, in line with my general observation from Chapter 5 that adversaries have good cause to interpret a rise in heroic rhetoric as a credible signal of commitment.

demonstrated that survey respondents felt more informed about and more supportive of US military action in Iraq following Bush's speech. (Figure 8.4).<sup>105</sup>

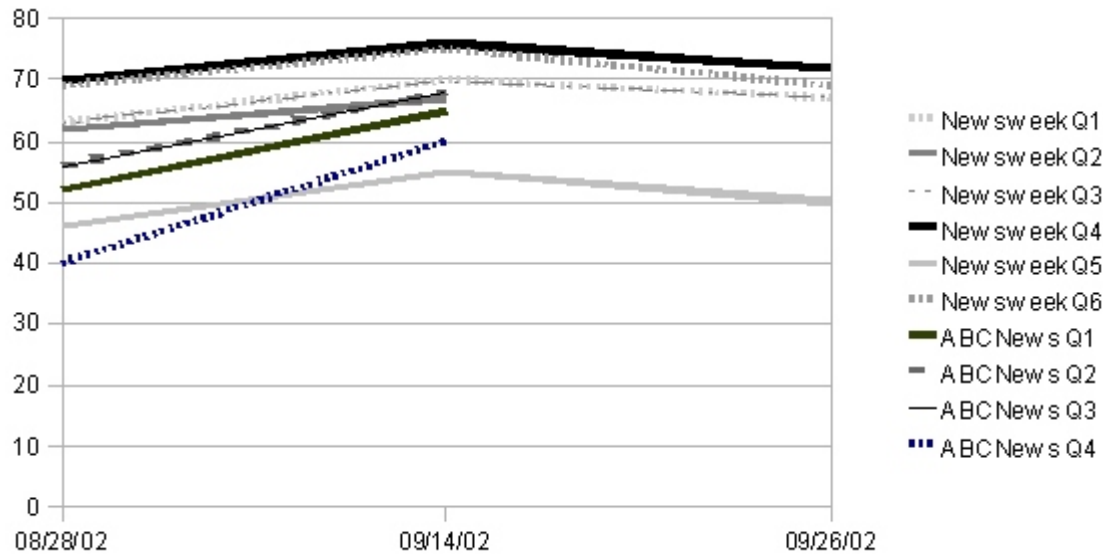


Figure 8.4

In sum, through his September 2002 speech before the United Nations, Bush may have conclusively demonstrated the persuasive power of a heroic frame on Iraq, linked to the War on Terror through the mechanism of WMD, on the US public. Of course, Bush may have also

<sup>105</sup> The trends in Figure 4 represent the maximal positive responses to the following questions. Newsweek Question 1: "Please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling each of the following specific aspects of his job. Do you approve or disapprove of the way he is handling policies to deal with the threat posed by Iraq and its leader Saddam Hussein?"; 2: "In the fight against terrorism, the Bush Administration has talked about using military force against Saddam Hussein and his military in Iraq. Would you support using military force against Iraq, or not?"; 3-6: "Please tell me whether or not you would support each of the following kinds of U.S. military action against Iraq and its leader Saddam Hussein....(3)"Using air strikes against Iraq without any troops on the ground"(4) "Sending in commandos or special forces to capture Saddam Hussein or work with local anti-Saddam forces" (5) "Sending in large numbers of U.S. ground troops to ensure control of the country", (6)"Organizing an INTERNATIONAL force to remove Saddam Hussein from power and take control of the country."

ABC News Question 1: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq and Saddam Hussein?"; 2:"Would you favor or oppose having U.S. forces take military action against Iraq to force Saddam Hussein from power?"; 3: "How important do you think it is for the United States to force Saddam Hussein from power: very important, somewhat important, not too important or not important at all?"; 4: "Do you think George W. Bush has a clear policy on Iraq, or not?"

persuaded the US public based on his evidence-based argument that Iraq had an active covert WMD program. At the time, it would have been difficult to determine which of these two elements of his speech provided the primary effect on public opinion. However, by 2004, when the evidence-based argument was demonstrated to be incorrect, there would be more of an opportunity to evaluate this.

### Reality Confronts the Narrative

Bush continued to speak with great regularity about Iraq through the course of the first two months of the war, during which time the US and its allies deposed Saddam Hussein and defeated the Iraqi army. On May 1, 2003, Bush made a speech declaring an end to “major combat operations” from the deck of the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Lincoln.

Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed... In this battle, we have fought for the cause of liberty and for the peace of the world. Our Nation and our coalition are proud of this accomplishment; yet it is you, the members of the United States military, who achieved it. Your courage, your willingness to face danger for your country and for each other, made this day possible. Because of you, our Nation is more secure. Because of you, the tyrant has fallen, and Iraq is free (Bush 2003).

In just the first few lines of his speech, Bush touched on most of the major elements of the heroic image – bellicosity, courage, selflessness – as well as delineating the specific villain and vulnerable victims in this particular narrative. However, the heroic nature of the moment was also strongly signaled in ways beyond Bush’s choice of language. Bush flew onto the carrier in a jet, wearing a military flight suit which strongly identified himself with the active military ‘hero’ class. Most memorably, he spoke in front of a large banner reading “Mission Accomplished.”

These heavy visual reinforcements of the heroic themes in his speech – together with the fact that despite the finality suggested by the phrase “mission accomplished,” American troops were still in Iraq for the foreseeable future – made Bush’s speech seem self-serving and hypocritical to some. Articles in the Washington Post and New York Times emphasized the deliberate nature of the imagery surrounding Bush’s speech, highlighting the image as manufactured and false, rather than appropriate and natural. In several articles, writers described the imagery of the event in terms of their filmic qualities. Editorialist Tom Shales noted:

As was painfully obvious before the president even opened his mouth, this was not just a speech but a patriotic spectacular, with the ship and its crew serving as crucial backdrops for Bush's remarks, something to cheer the viewing nation and to make Bush look dramatically commander-in-chiefly...Movie buffs with good memories might have been reminded by the spectacle of the opening scene of an MGM musical called "Anchors Aweigh," a World War II flag-waver. Jose Iturbi stood on the deck of just such an aircraft carrier conducting a huge Navy band as the movie began. Of course, that was in

Technicolor and accomplished with lavish special effects. But then again, so, in a way, was Bush's speech. He wasn't conducting a band, though; he was conducting a country. (Shales 2003).

Similarly, reporter Elizabeth Bumiller suggested that the roots of the imagery for Bush's speech lay in a popular movie about arrogant aviators:

George W. Bush's "Top Gun" landing on the deck of the carrier Abraham Lincoln will be remembered as one of the most audacious moments of presidential theater in American history. But it was only the latest example of how the Bush administration, going far beyond the foundations in stagecraft set by the Reagan White House, is using the powers of television and technology to promote a presidency like never before (2003).<sup>106</sup>

These skeptical perspectives preceded – but foreshadowed – an upcoming split in US public opinion on the war. From the end of “major combat operations” through the next year of war in Iraq, Bush's heroic narrative around the War in Iraq was shown repeatedly to be an inaccurate reflection of reality. The phrase “Mission Accomplished” came to define the disconnect between Bush's heroic narrative and the reality of the Iraq War. However, the difference in responses to it may have provided the first evidence of an important schism between two different groups: people who were attentive to the importance of the symbolic elements of war and people who were attentive to the factual elements of war. As presidential spokesman Ari Fleischer observed of the “Mission Accomplished” speech one year later:

Looking back now, I think it is a classic issue of the Bush presidency...People who like the president still think it was a great event and it was the appropriate way to say thank you to the military, even if combat has flared back up again. People who don't like the president thought it was showmanship and think he was wrong...And I think people in the middle are in the middle. They probably think it was right of him to say thank you to the military because of the hostilities, but they think he got the facts wrong (Roberts 2004).

As Fleischer describes it, the issue of whether the “mission” factually was or was not “accomplished” was not the most important issue for those who supported the event. For those supporters, what was most important was the symbolic meaning of the event: the performance of

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<sup>106</sup> This critical identification of parallels between presidential heroic imagery and movie imagery recalls both Michael Rogin's (1987) analysis of Reagan's rhetoric and the derisive references to Star Wars which accompanied Reagan's advocacy for strategic missile defense.

gratefulness to heroes.<sup>107</sup> Meanwhile, for those who opposed it, it was “showmanship,” which is to say that it was just entertainment, different from and opposed to reality.

The symbolic, heroic argument for the Iraq War went up against two major competitors between mid-2003 and mid-2004. The first, and more serious, was the fact that no stockpile of WMD or evidence of a major existing WMD program were found in Iraq. Bush had focused very specifically on WMD as the link which tied Iraq to the overarching War on Terror, so this had the potential to sever the main moral grounding for the war. It also threatened to undermine Bush’s credibility, since Bush had become so personally involved in making the WMD case. The second was the scandal caused by the discovery that Americans were abusing Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison. Not only did this event sully the heroic image which carefully shielded military actors from the moral consequences of their routine use of violence, but it tied them, with uncomfortably closeness, to the villainous image of Saddam Hussein. In his argument for war, Bush had focused with great frequency on Saddam’s use of torture in prisons;<sup>108</sup> to see Americans doing it brought the heroes into behavioral association with the villains. While the public might not identify Bush as being primarily responsible for the problem at Abu Ghraib, it nonetheless had strong potential to undermine America’s heroic status within the war. It is very difficult to defend a hero’s villainous actions within the context of the heroic narrative, rendering the heroic narrative less useful as a rhetorical device.

The official acceptance that no chemical or biological weapons would be found in Iraq came about somewhat gradually. US troops specifically tasked with locating WMD stockpiles (the 75th Exploitation Task Force) were frustrated in their search throughout the initial invasion (Gellman 2003). In May 2003, the Pentagon formed the Iraq Survey Group, a team of over 1,000 people charged with locating WMD as well as collecting information on “other areas of national interest” like terrorism (Cambone 2003). Official arguments for the existence of an active pre-war WMD program were further shaken in July 2003 by revelations from Joseph Wilson, a diplomat who had investigated the Bush administration’s claim that Saddam Hussein had tried to buy ingredients for nuclear weapons from Niger and found the case to have been manufactured

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<sup>107</sup> This particular understanding of the event as representing an appropriate symbolic closure to a heroic narrative was reflected in the summer 2003 issue of a commemorative action-figure doll of Bush wearing a flight suit. The product was described as follows: “BBI proudly introduces the latest issue in its Elite Force series of authentic military 12-inch figures, President George W. Bush in naval aviator flight suit. Exacting in detail and fully equipped with authentic gear, this limited-edition action figure is a meticulous 1:6 recreation of the Commander-in-Chief’s appearance during his historic Aircraft Carrier landing...This fully poseable figure features a realistic head sculpt, fully detailed cloth flight suit, helmet with oxygen mask, survival vest, g-pants, parachute harness and much more. The realism and exacting attention to detail demanded by today’s 12-inch action figure enthusiast are met and exceeded with this action figure.” Retrieved online on July 14, 2010 from: <http://www.amazon.com/Elite-Force-Aviator-George-President/dp/B0002J9G1S>.

<sup>108</sup> A search for speeches in which George W. Bush mentions both “Saddam Hussein” and “torture” turns up over 300 texts.



(Wilson 2003). In October 2003, David Kay, the head of the Iraq Survey Group, acknowledged that no WMD had been found, although he held out hope that the group might yet find evidence that these weapons had existed before the war (Kay 2003). By January 2004, however, Kay acknowledged that “we were all wrong” about the pre-war existence of WMD.

Then, in April 2004, CBS News obtained photos of US soldiers abusing, raping, and humiliating Iraqi prisoners in the Abu Ghraib prison. These photos provided public evidence of horrifying practices committed by some of the ‘heroes’ who had ‘liberated’ Iraq, seriously undermining the cohesion of the heroic narrative about the US role in the country. The photos – and the stories which accompanied them – were graphic and nauseating; they had tremendous staying power in the US domestic and international public eye. Many of the most terrible allegations were documented and verified in an official investigative report produced by Major General Antonio Taguba (2004) which came out in public not long after the photos entered the media.

Like the “Mission Accomplished” speech, the problem of nonexistent WMD did not immediately negatively affect the opinions of war supporters. A CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll conducted at the end of May 2003 found that 56% of those surveyed would think the war was justified even if the US did not find conclusive evidence of a weapons program (CNN/USA Today/Gallup 2003), while an ABC News/Washington Post poll in mid-June 2003 found that 63% of respondents would think the war justified whether or not weapons were found (ABC News/Washington Post 2003). However, opinions began to shift over time and with additional casualties. More and more respondents answered that they believed the Iraq War had not been worth the cost. Further, specifically between late April and early May, when the Abu Ghraib scandal became public, it is possible to note an additional small but steep drop in public support for the Iraq War (Corley 2007). (Figure 8.5.)

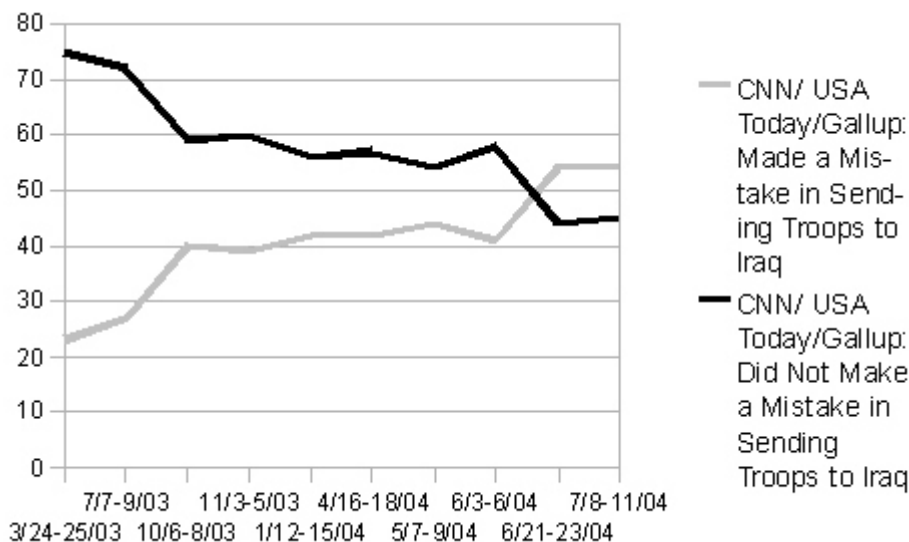


Figure 8.5

This period was an exceptionally trying one for Bush's heroic narrative on the Iraq War. In at least two areas, reality contradicted the implications of the heroic narrative: the evil schemes of the villain were not substantiated and the virtuous nature of the heroes was brought into question. Throughout this period it was possible to see Bush using a new strategy, which was to simultaneously acknowledge the problems presented by reality while simultaneously maintaining a heroic frame. This required him to coordinate two essentially contradictory versions of reality; the results are fairly strained and unnatural. For example, after agreeing in early February to create a commission to evaluate failures in pre-war intelligence, Bush granted an interview to NBC journalist Tim Russert. Bush first agreed with Russert's assertion that his intelligence was wrong:

RUSSERT: The night you took the country to war, March 17th, you said this: "Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised." THE PRESIDENT: Right. RUSSERT: That apparently is not the case. THE PRESIDENT: Correct.

Then, in response to Russert's question about whether the War in Iraq was worth the costs, given the mistaken intelligence, Bush replied:

It's essential that I explain this properly to the parents of those who lost their lives. Saddam Hussein was dangerous, and I'm not gonna leave him in power and trust a madman. He's a dangerous man. He had the ability to make weapons at the very minimum. For the parents of the soldiers who have fallen who are listening, David Kay, the weapons inspector, came back and said, "In many ways Iraq was more dangerous than we thought." It's - we're in a war against these terrorists who will bring great harm to America, and I've asked these young ones to sacrifice for that. A free Iraq will change the world. It's historic times. A free Iraq will make it easier for other children in our own country to grow up in a safer world because in the Middle East is where you find the hatred and violence that enables the enemy to recruit its killers. And, Tim, as you can tell, I've got a foreign policy that is one that believes America has a responsibility in this world to lead, a responsibility to lead in the war against terror, a responsibility to speak clearly about the threats that we all face, a responsibility to promote freedom, to free people from the clutches of barbaric people such as Saddam Hussein who tortured, mutilated - there were mass graves that we have found - a responsibility to fight AIDS, the pandemic of AIDS, and to feed the hungry. We have a responsibility. To me that is history's call to America. I accept the call and will continue to lead in that direction (Bush 2004b).

The message is heroic, yet disjointed and illogical. Bush used a similar tactic of acknowledging reality while simultaneously reinforcing a contradictory heroic frame in discussing the abuses at Abu Ghraib. For example, in a Saturday Radio Address on May 15, 2004, he stated:

Our country has great respect for the Iraqi people, and we are determined to expose and punish the abuse of Iraqi detainees. Charges have been filed against seven soldiers, and the first trial is set to begin next week. My administration and our military are determined that such abuses never happen again. All Americans know that the actions of a few do not reflect the true character of the United States Armed Forces. No military in the history of the world has fought so hard and so often for the freedom of others. Today, our forces are keeping terrorists across the world on the run. They're helping the people of Afghanistan and Iraq to build democratic societies, making America more secure. By their example, the people of those countries and of the countries around the world are coming to know that freedom is the answer to hopelessness and terror. Our servicemen and women are defending America with unselfish courage, and their achievements have brought pride and credit to this nation (Bush 2004c).

This prepared message is clearer, but represents a similar lack of integration of facts with the heroic narrative. Though the lack of positive public response was overdetermined due to the accumulating effect of casualties in Iraq and the consequence of two major blows to the Iraq War's credibility, Bush's rhetorical response to the scandals wasn't capable of altering it.

### Doubling Down

After the long slide in public opinion over the first half of 2004, Bush began to speak more regularly and more comfortably about the Iraq War again. The exigencies of the 2004 presidential campaign placed him back in the position of speaking frequently to receptive groups, often with the express purpose of increasing enthusiasm among people who already supported him. In this setting, rather than mainly responding to charges that he had misled the nation into war or managed a policy of torture, Bush was free to describe his decision-making on his own terms. This allowed him to move beyond the constrained and confusing work of combining unfriendly realities with heroic narrative and to shift back to his simplified version of events. It was also essential for Bush to focus specifically on regaining support for the Iraq War, because he was so inextricably identified with it. Democratic candidates repeatedly focused on the fact that the Iraq War was unnecessary, from the earliest stages of the campaign (CNN 2004). Meanwhile, according to daily polling, Bush was losing ground to the Democratic candidate.

Tracking the frequency with which Bush spoke about Iraq and WMD, it is evident that he committed to a decision to "double down" on his perspective on the Iraq War during the late summer of 2004. From an already substantial frequency of around one speech mentioning Iraq a day in July, Bush was making an average a three a day in October (Figure 8.6).

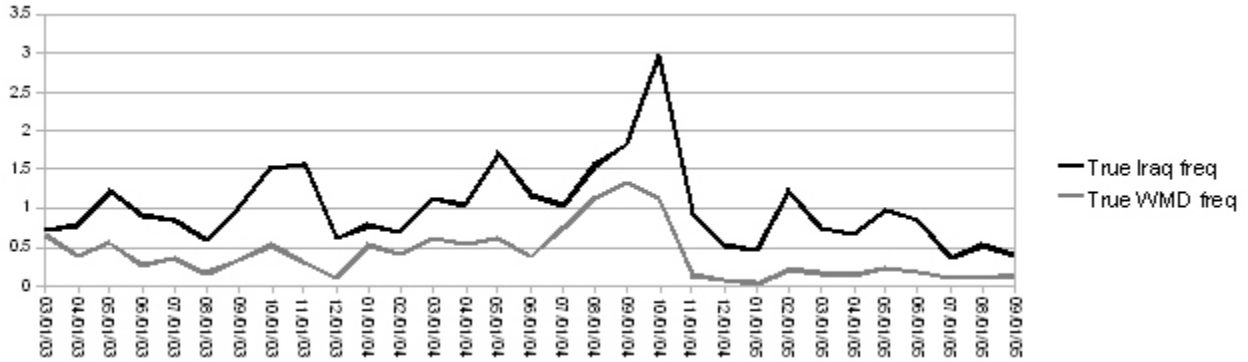


Figure 8.6

As is generally the case with campaign speeches, Bush gave a roughly similar speech a large number of times. While he rarely explicitly mentioned the War on Terror in these speeches, Bush maintained a heroic frame which was in every way consistent with the War on Terror. His discussion of foreign policy always began with a reference to the September 11 attacks: the call to action which awakened the US to its global heroic mission.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. Since September the 11th, 2001, that terrible morning which changed our history, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake.

He then positioned the US as being part-way through this struggle, having overcome some of the obstacles on the way to the achievement of our ultimate goal. In this context, Iraq was cast in the position of being a subordinate battle to the ultimate, greater war.

We're working to advance liberty around the world and in--most particularly, the broader Middle East, and we're going to prevail. We will prevail. Our strategy is succeeding. Four years ago, not all that long ago, Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida; Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups; Saudi Arabia was a fertile ground for terrorist fundraising; Libya was pursuing nuclear weapons; Iraq was a gathering threat; Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Having located Iraq within the larger War on Terror narrative, it made more sense to think about Iraq as an inevitable battle. Emphasizing Saddam Hussein's role within the larger war, the battle of good versus evil, identified him as a persistent, implacable foe. The association of Saddam Hussein with persistent evil also made the niggling specifics of exactly what he had or what he had done less pressing.

We knew Saddam Hussein's record of aggression and his support for terror. Abu Nidal, the guy who killed Leon Klinghoffer, he and his organization were in Baghdad. Zarqawi was in Baghdad. He's the guy that beheads people in hopes to cause us to shirk our duty.

Saddam Hussein paid the families of suicide bombers. He's a sworn enemy of this country. We knew he had a long history of pursuing weapons of mass destruction. We knew he had used weapons of mass destruction. And we know that after September the 11th, we must think differently. We must take threats seriously, before they fully materialize (Bush 2004d).

At least one aspect of Bush's listing of the abuses committed by Saddam Hussein illustrates the significance of the general, symbolic narrative over the specific fact-linked details. In dozens of speeches similar to this one, Bush repeated that Saddam Hussein sheltered Abu Nidal, the killer of (*Achille Lauro* passenger) Leon Klinghoffer. As it happens, while Abu Nidal was certainly associated with terrorist organizations, he was never under suspicion of involvement in the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro*. Bush probably meant to refer to Abu Abbas, a man who had in fact been identified as the planner of that attack. However, the fact that neither Bush nor any of his campaign staff ever bothered to check or change this substantially incorrect point suggests that the specifics of what Saddam Hussein – or any of the established villains had done – was ultimately not that important. What *was* important was their identity as villains, and from that identity any number of evil behaviors could be expected. Once more, Bush repeated a speech that was near-identical to this many times. Figure 8.7 displays the frequency per month of the speech closest to this one I just cited: speeches in which Bush mentioned Leon Klinghoffer.

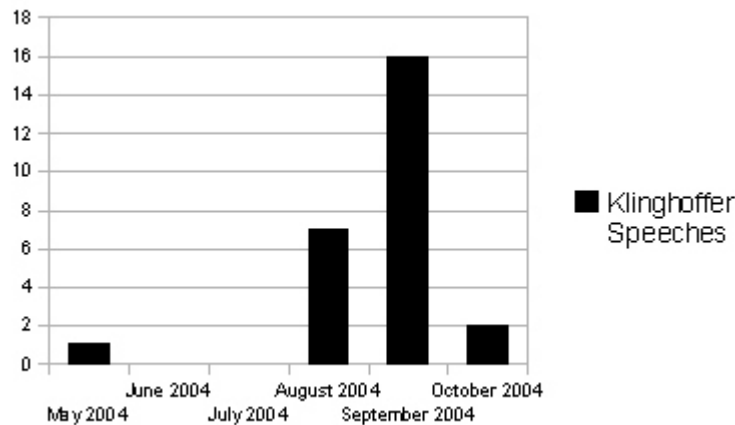


Figure 8.7

Meanwhile, in all of the speeches which I examined in this period in which Bush had so dramatically increased his attention to Iraq, I did not find an assertion that the US had found WMD in Iraq. Nor did Bush make any assertions that Saddam Hussein had either been involved in the September 11 attacks or had even interacted in any way with Al Qaeda. Unlike his carelessness with Abu Nidal, Bush scrupulously avoided misspeaking about these other particulars, probably because these issues had already proven to be so politically problematic. Nonetheless, Bush also did not say that these things were not the case. Moreover, if one were to extrapolate from the way Saddam Hussein was described, it would seem likely that such a man would in fact delight in trying to aid the September 11 attackers, stockpile WMD, and work with

Al Qaeda. This lack of specificity about exactly which evil behaviors belong to each particular evildoer is a natural extension of the War on Terror frame, in which all the world's evil is in allegiance against the alliance of good. In that context, the fact that the specifics of the rationale for war were elided here (or were slightly incorrect) wouldn't have even seemed all that remarkable. Under the "wars on" frame – and particularly under the War on Terror frame – policy specifics are positioned as being much less important than the overall moral correctness of the War.

Despite the fact that Bush did not specifically assert that WMD were found or that Saddam Hussein worked with Al Qaeda, the persuasive power of the heroic frame is evident in the fact that the public nonetheless seems to have heard that he did. PIPA/Knowledge Networks performed a series of surveys to establish a range of American beliefs in the months running up to the war. In August 2004, they found that a great majority of respondents (58% of Bush supporters and 63% of Kerry supporters) felt that Bush was continuing to say that Iraq had possessed WMD just before the war (PIPA/Knowledge Networks 2004). This was an interesting finding since by August Bush had, in fact, agreed on many occasions that US intelligence on Iraq's pre-war WMD program had been wrong. Meanwhile, in October 2004 – after the president's dramatic increase in heroically framed speech on Iraq – PIPA/Knowledge Networks found that an even larger number of respondents believed Bush to be currently saying that Saddam Hussein had possessed WMD just before the war (63% of Bush supporters and 73% of Kerry supporters). PIPA/Knowledge Networks also found that in October, 75% of respondents believed that Bush was currently saying that Iraq had either given support to Al Qaeda or had participated in the September 11 attacks (PIPA/Knowledge Networks 2004). Again, while Bush made a clear general association between all of these evil activities under the heroic framework of the War on Terror, *he did not actually say the things that an overwhelming majority of respondents attributed to him*. The fact that there was an upward change in the number of people who heard Bush say these things just after his renewed heroic framing of the Iraq War makes it plausible to believe that the way in which he spoke effected the change. The heroic frame appeared to be validated in this case as a rhetorical tool which could successfully create a useful set of implications in the minds of audience members.

While PIPA/Knowledge Networks focused on the specific messages people seemed to grasp from Bush's speech, the poll did not inquire into the possibility that people had derived these specific messages out of a larger schema or frame such as the heroic frame. However, had Bush managed to increase the incidence of audience use of such a frame, this would have represented a seminal accomplishment of persuasive rhetoric. In order to convert public opinion on Iraq in a more positive direction, Bush needed to encourage people to move from an evaluation of the specific costs and benefits of the war to an acceptance of the heroic narrative of the war. If people accepted that the war should be judged based on its ability to save us from terror, for its heroic qualities, then this would lead to a more positive evaluation of the Iraq War and, by extension, of Bush. Offering some support for this theory, a series of Gallup polls asking respondents to identify the "most important problem" facing the nation demonstrate a compatible public opinion change. In the immediate wake of Bush's increase in speech about Iraq, more people identified terrorism as the nation's most important problem and fewer people identified the War in Iraq as the nation's most important problem (see Figure 8.8.) Since there was no



salient episode of terrorism during this time, this might provide another intervening variable that we could ascribe to a successful heroic framing effort. Furthermore, beyond an assertion of the Iraq War's importance, accepting Bush's message that the Iraq represented part of an overarching heroic struggle would have led to increased support for the war. Several polls demonstrate that after a long period of sliding support for the Iraq War, some respondents began to support it again in the late summer and early fall of 2004 (Figure 8.9).<sup>109</sup>

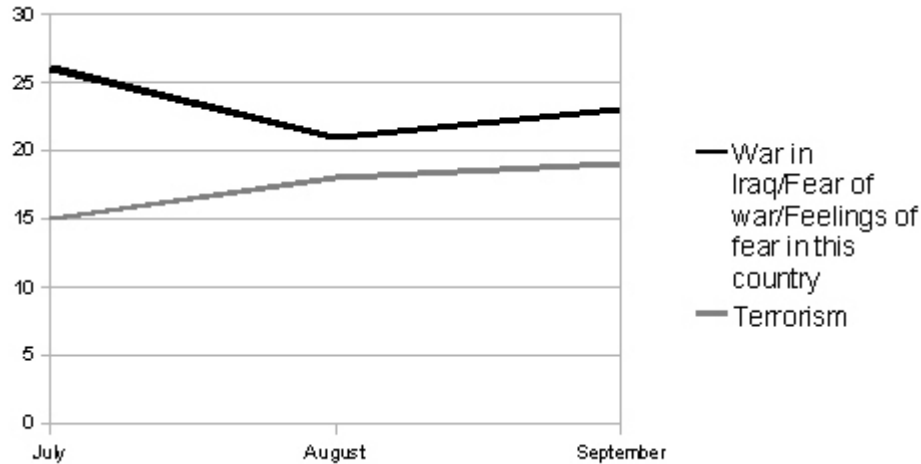


Figure 8.8: Nation's Most Important Problem

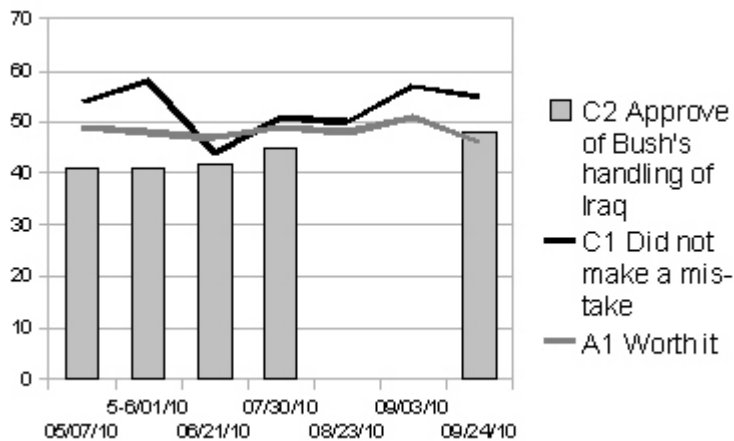


Figure 8.9: Support for Iraq War

<sup>109</sup> The survey results charted in Figure 9 were from the following polls.

CNN/USA Today/Gallup Poll - C1: In view of the developments since we first sent our troops to Iraq, do you think the United States made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq, or not? C2: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?

ABC/Washington Post Poll - A1: All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war with Iraq was worth fighting, or not?

The most consequential polls at the time, meanwhile, were those relating to candidate popularity. In the late summer and early fall of 2004, Rasmussen performed daily surveys to discover which candidate voters supported in the upcoming presidential elections. Starting in mid-August, the Rasmussen polls find that increasing numbers of voters began to support Bush, allowing him to erase the small lead which Kerry had been maintaining in previous polls (Figure 8.10). Throughout the period of his intensified attention to Iraq, Bush maintained a several-point advantage in this series. Was Bush’s ability to persuade some voters to support the Iraq War responsible for the change in voter preferences? It is difficult to say, but some scholars have demonstrated that Bush was able to capture the vote of swing voters who supported the war, and that these votes ultimately proved decisive for Bush’s election (Norpoth and Sidman 2007).<sup>110</sup>



Figure 8.10: Rasmussen: Which candidate do you plan to vote for?

There was a certain irony in the rising importance of Bush’s heroic narrative of the War on Terror, since he was competing against John Kerry, a man who had been seen as electable precisely because he was known as a “war hero.” However, because the heroic ideal was indeed important for critical voters, this credential became an important subject of campaign focus at the same time Bush was rebuilding his own heroic narrative. A new organization called the “Swift Boat Veterans for Truth” organization produced four widely broadcast television advertisements in August with the aim of sowing doubt about Kerry’s military service during the Vietnam War. Kerry’s military service, for which he had been awarded a number of combat medals, had hitherto been considered one of his important strengths as a presidential candidate. The Swift Boat Veterans group attacked the authenticity of Kerry’s accounts of his own behavior and aimed to show that he had lied about the events leading to his awards in order to be considered a hero. In this case, a concentrated effort to discredit Kerry’s heroism may have effectively resulted in a loss of support (Borick 2005) at precisely the same moment Bush increased his heroic focus on Iraq. One way or another, a change in voters’ assessment of the legitimacy of heroic imagery was determinative in the late summer and early fall of 2004: if it wasn’t increased support of Bush’s heroic narrative which was driving the change, there’s a good chance it might have resulted from activist success in undoing John Kerry’s own heroic narrative.

<sup>110</sup> The Rasmussen polls in Figure 8.10 represent rolling seven day averages.

## Conclusion

George W. Bush's victory in 2004 would seem to represent a validation of the power of the heroic frame. Despite the fact that quite a bit of credible information had been disseminated which discredited the US rationale for war in Iraq, Bush's rejuvenated effort to heroically frame the Iraq War appears to have allowed a significant number of people to disregard that information. In a larger sense, what does that mean?

If there are effectively two different standards for truth – a “reality-based” one, which attends to physical and material facts, and an emotional one, which attends to the inner trajectory of meaningful narratives – what does that mean for governmental decision-makers? For a democratic electorate? Steven Kull and his colleagues from PIPA/Knowledge Networks express a desultory opinion on this matter. The very “cohesion of society can be damaged,” they warn, “by a persisting and fundamental division in the perception of what is real, undermining pathways to consensus and mutual sacrifice, and making the country increasingly difficult to govern” (2004).

Furthermore, what does it mean when the heroic narrative, the emotional truth, can lead us to validate violence against other people? The violence in Iraq, by any measure, has been staggering. In this sort of case, where the use of a heroic narrative can lead people to accept that this sort of violence is appropriate and acceptable, it can be hard for those of us in the “reality-based community” to feel in any way neutral about the subject of our study. As empirical observers, however, I believe it is also vital that we recognize the effectiveness of the heroic narrative as a rhetorical tool, whether or not we like those effects. Without a recognition of their existence there will be no way to attenuate them. If left unaddressed, these effects will retain their power the next time a heroic narrator calls us to war.

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## APPENDIX A: Reference Texts Used in Dictionary Creation

### 1. *Annual Address to Congress ("The Four Freedoms")* Franklin Delano Roosevelt, January 6, 1941

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Seventy-seventh Congress:

I address you, the Members of the Seventy-seventh Congress, at a moment unprecedented in the history of the Union. I use the word "unprecedented," because at no previous time has American security been as seriously threatened from without as it is today.

Since the permanent formation of our Government under the Constitution, in 1789, most of the periods of crisis in our history have related to our domestic affairs. Fortunately, only one of these—the four-year War Between the States—ever threatened our national unity. Today, thank God, one hundred and thirty million Americans, in forty-eight States, have forgotten points of the compass in our national unity.

It is true that prior to 1914 the United States often had been disturbed by events in other Continents. We had even engaged in two wars with European nations and in a number of undeclared wars in the West Indies, in the Mediterranean and in the Pacific for the maintenance of American rights and for the principles of peaceful commerce. But in no case had a serious threat been raised against our national safety or our continued independence.

What I seek to convey is the historic truth that the United States as a nation has at all times maintained clear, definite opposition, to any attempt to lock us in behind an ancient Chinese wall while the procession of civilization went past. Today, thinking of our children and of their children, we oppose enforced isolation for ourselves or for any other part of the Americas.

That determination of ours, extending over all these years, was proved, for example, during the quarter century of wars following the French Revolution.

While the Napoleonic struggles did threaten interests of the United States because of the French foothold in the West Indies and in Louisiana, and while we engaged in the War of 1812 to vindicate our right to peaceful trade, it is nevertheless clear that neither France nor Great Britain, nor any other nation, was aiming at domination of the whole world.

In like fashion from 1815 to 1914— ninety-nine years— no single war in Europe or in Asia constituted a real threat against our future or against the future of any other American nation.

Except in the Maximilian interlude in Mexico, no foreign power sought to establish itself in this Hemisphere; and the strength of the British fleet in the Atlantic has been a friendly strength. It is still a friendly strength.

Even when the World War broke out in 1914, it seemed to contain only small threat of danger to our own American future. But, as time went on, the American people began to visualize what the downfall of democratic nations might mean to our own democracy.

We need not overemphasize imperfections in the Peace of Versailles. We need not harp on failure of the democracies to deal with problems of world reconstruction. We should remember that the Peace of 1919 was far less unjust than the kind of "pacification" which began even before Munich, and which is being carried on under the new order of tyranny that seeks to spread over every continent today. The American people have unalterably set their faces against that tyranny.

Every realist knows that the democratic way of life is at this moment being' directly assailed in every part of the world—assailed either by arms, or by secret spreading of poisonous propaganda by those who seek to destroy unity and promote discord in nations that are still at peace.

During sixteen long months this assault has blotted out the whole pattern of democratic life in an appalling number of independent nations, great and small. The assailants are still on the march, threatening other nations, great and small.

Therefore, as your President, performing my constitutional duty to "give to the Congress information of the state of the Union," I find it, unhappily, necessary to report that the future and the safety of our country and of our democracy are overwhelmingly involved in events far beyond our borders.

Armed defense of democratic existence is now being gallantly waged in four continents. If that defense fails, all the population and all the resources of Europe, Asia, Africa and Australasia will be dominated by the conquerors. Let us remember that the total of those populations and their resources in those four continents greatly exceeds the sum total of the population and the resources of the whole of the Western Hemisphere-many times over.

In times like these it is immature—and incidentally, untrue—for anybody to brag that an unprepared America, single-handed, and with one hand tied behind its back, can hold off the whole world.

No realistic American can expect from a dictator's peace international generosity, or return of true independence, or world disarmament, or freedom of expression, or freedom of religion -or even good business.

Such a peace would bring no security for us or for our neighbors. "Those, who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."

As a nation, we may take pride in the fact that we are softhearted; but we cannot afford to be soft-headed.

We must always be wary of those who with sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal preach the "ism" of appeasement.

We must especially beware of that small group of selfish men who would clip the wings of the American eagle in order to feather their own nests.

I have recently pointed out how quickly the tempo of modern warfare could bring into our very midst the physical attack which we must eventually expect if the dictator nations win this war.

There is much loose talk of our immunity from immediate and direct invasion from across the seas. Obviously, as long as the British Navy retains its power, no such danger exists. Even if there were no British Navy, it is not probable that any enemy would be stupid enough to attack us by landing troops in the United States from across thousands of miles of ocean, until it had acquired strategic bases from which to operate.

But we learn much from the lessons of the past years in Europe—particularly the lesson of Norway, whose essential seaports were captured by treachery and surprise built up over a series of years.

The first phase of the invasion of this Hemisphere would not be the landing of regular troops. The necessary strategic points would be occupied by secret agents and their dupes— and great numbers of them are already here, and in Latin America.

As long as the aggressor nations maintain the offensive, they—not we—will choose the time and the place and the method of their attack.

That is why the future of all the American Republics is today in serious danger.

That is why this Annual Message to the Congress is unique in our history.

That is why every member of the Executive Branch of the Government and every member of the Congress faces great responsibility and great accountability.

The need of the moment is that our actions and our policy should be devoted primarily—almost exclusively—to meeting this foreign peril. For all our domestic problems are now a part of the great emergency.

Just as our national policy in internal affairs has been based upon a decent respect for the rights and the dignity of all our fellow men within our gates, so our national policy in foreign affairs has been based on a decent respect for the rights and dignity of all nations, large and small. And the justice of morality must and will win in the end.

Our national policy is this:



First, by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to all-inclusive national defense.

Second, by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to full support of all those resolute peoples, everywhere, who are resisting aggression and are thereby keeping war away from our Hemisphere. By this support, we express our determination that the democratic cause shall prevail; and we strengthen the defense and the security of our own nation.

Third, by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to the proposition that principles of morality and considerations for our own security will never permit us to acquiesce in a peace dictated by aggressors and sponsored by appeasers. We know that enduring peace cannot be bought at the cost of other people's freedom.

In the recent national election there was no substantial difference between the two great parties in respect to that national policy. No issue was fought out on this line before the American electorate. Today it is abundantly evident that American citizens everywhere are demanding and supporting speedy and complete action in recognition of obvious danger.

Therefore, the immediate need is a swift and driving increase in our armament production.

Leaders of industry and labor have responded to our summons. Goals of speed have been set. In some cases these goals are being reached ahead of time; in some cases we are on schedule; in other cases there are slight but not serious delays; and in some cases—and I am sorry to say very important cases—we are all concerned by the slowness of the accomplishment of our plans.

The Army and Navy, however, have made substantial progress during the past year. Actual experience is improving and speeding up our methods of production with every passing day. And today's best is not good enough for tomorrow.

I am not satisfied with the progress thus far made. The men in charge of the program represent the best in training, in ability, and in patriotism. They are not satisfied with the progress thus far made. None of us will be satisfied until the job is done.

No matter whether the original goal was set too high or too low, our objective is quicker and better results. To give you two illustrations:

We are behind schedule in turning out finished airplanes; we are working day and night to solve the innumerable problems and to catch up.

We are ahead of schedule in building warships but we are working to get even further ahead of that schedule.

To change a whole nation from a basis of peacetime production of implements of peace to a basis of wartime production of implements of war is no small task. And the greatest difficulty comes at the beginning of the program, when new tools, new plant facilities, new assembly lines, and new ship ways must first be constructed before the actual materiel begins to flow steadily and speedily from them.

The Congress, of course, must rightly keep itself informed at all times of the progress of the program. However, there is certain information, as the Congress itself will readily recognize, which, in the interests of our own security and those of the nations that we are supporting, must of needs be kept in confidence.

New circumstances are constantly begetting new needs for our safety. I shall ask this Congress for greatly increased new appropriations and authorizations to carry on what we have begun.

I also ask this Congress for authority and for funds sufficient to manufacture additional munitions and war supplies of many kinds, to be turned over to those nations which are now in actual war with aggressor nations.

Our most useful and immediate role is to act as an arsenal for them as well as for ourselves. They do not need man power, but they do need billions of dollars worth of the weapons of defense.

The time is near when they will not be able to pay for them all in ready cash. We cannot, and we will not, tell them that they must surrender, merely because of present inability to pay for the weapons which we know they must have.

I do not recommend that we make them a loan of dollars with which to pay for these weapons—a loan to be repaid in dollars.

I recommend that we make it possible for those nations to continue to obtain war materials in the United States, fitting their orders into our own program. Nearly all their materiel would, if the time ever came, be useful for our own defense.

Taking counsel of expert military and naval authorities, considering what is best for our own security, we are free to decide how much should be kept here and how much should be sent abroad to our friends who by their determined and heroic resistance are giving us time in which to make ready our own defense.

For what we send abroad, we shall be repaid within a reasonable time following the close of hostilities, in similar materials, or, at our option, in other goods of many kinds, which they can produce and which we need.

Let us say to the democracies: "We Americans are vitally concerned in your defense of freedom. We are putting forth our energies, our resources and our organizing powers to give you the

strength to regain and maintain a free world. We shall send you, in ever-increasing numbers, ships, planes, tanks, guns. This is our purpose and our pledge."

In fulfillment of this purpose we will not be intimidated by the threats of dictators that they will regard as a breach of international law or as an act of war our aid to the democracies which dare to resist their aggression. Such aid is not an act of war, even if a dictator should unilaterally proclaim it so to be.

When the dictators, if the dictators, are ready to make war upon us, they will not wait for an act of war on our part. They did not wait for Norway or Belgium or the Netherlands to commit an act of war.

Their only interest is in a new one-way international law, which lacks mutuality in its observance, and, therefore, becomes an instrument of oppression.

The happiness of future generations of Americans may well depend upon how effective and how immediate we can make our aid felt. No one can tell the exact character of the emergency situations that we may be called upon to meet. The Nation's hands must not be tied when the Nation's life is in danger.

We must all prepare to make the sacrifices that the emergency-almost as serious as war itself—demands. Whatever stands in the way of speed and efficiency in defense preparations must give way to the national need.

A free nation has the right to expect full cooperation from all groups. A free nation has the right to look to the leaders of business, of labor, and of agriculture to take the lead in stimulating effort, not among other groups but within their own groups.

The best way of dealing with the few slackers or trouble makers in our midst is, first, to shame them by patriotic example, and, if that fails, to use the sovereignty of Government to save Government.

As men do not live by bread alone, they do not fight by armaments alone. Those who man our defenses, and those behind them who build our defenses, must have the stamina and the courage which come from unshakable belief in the manner of life which they are defending. The mighty action that we are calling for cannot be based on a disregard of all things worth fighting for.

The Nation takes great satisfaction and much strength from the things which have been done to make its people conscious of their individual stake in the preservation of democratic life in America. Those things have toughened the fibre of our people, have renewed their faith and strengthened their devotion to the institutions we make ready to protect.

Certainly this is no time for any of us to stop thinking about the social and economic problems

which are the root cause of the social revolution which is today a supreme factor in the world.

For there is nothing mysterious about the foundations of a healthy and strong democracy. The basic things expected by our people of their political and economic systems are simple. They are:

Equality of opportunity for youth and for others.

Jobs for those who can work.

Security for those who need it.

The ending of special privilege for the few.

The preservation of civil liberties for all.

The enjoyment of the fruits of scientific progress in a wider and constantly rising standard of living.

These are the simple, basic things that must never be lost sight of in the turmoil and unbelievable complexity of our modern world. The inner and abiding strength of our economic and political systems is dependent upon the degree to which they fulfill these expectations.

Many subjects connected with our social economy call for immediate improvement.

As examples:

We should bring more citizens under the coverage of old-age pensions and unemployment insurance.

We should widen the opportunities for adequate medical care.

We should plan a better system by which persons deserving or needing gainful employment may obtain it.

I have called for personal sacrifice. I am assured of the willingness of almost all Americans to respond to that call.

A part of the sacrifice means the payment of more money in taxes. In my Budget Message I shall recommend that a greater portion of this great defense program be paid for from taxation than we are paying today. No person should try, or be allowed, to get rich out of this program; and the principle of tax payments in accordance with ability to pay should be constantly before our eyes to guide our legislation.

If the Congress maintains these principles, the voters, putting patriotism ahead of pocketbooks, will give you their applause.

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.

That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation. That kind of world is the very antithesis of the so-called new order of tyranny which the dictators seek to create with the crash of a bomb.

To that new order we oppose the greater conception—the moral order. A good society is able to face schemes of world domination and foreign revolutions alike without fear.

Since the beginning of our American history, we have been engaged in change—in a perpetual peaceful revolution—a revolution which goes on steadily, quietly adjusting itself to changing conditions—without the concentration camp or the quick-lime in the ditch. The world order which we seek is the cooperation of free countries, working together in a friendly, civilized society.

This nation has placed its destiny in the hands and heads and hearts of its millions of free men and women; and its faith in freedom under the guidance of God. Freedom means the supremacy of human rights everywhere. Our support goes to those who struggle to gain those rights or keep them. Our strength is our unity of purpose. To that high concept there can be no end save victory.

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2. *“Not a Clash Between Civilisations, but a Clash About Civilisation,” Speech to the Foreign Policy Centre and Reuters in London*  
Tony Blair, March 21, 2006

Over these past nine years, Britain has pursued a markedly different foreign policy. We have been strongly activist, justifying our actions, even if not always successfully, at least as much by reference to values as interests. We have constructed a foreign policy agenda that has sought to link, in values, military action in Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq with diplomatic action on climate change, world trade, Africa and Palestine. I set out the basis for this in the a speech I gave in Chicago in 1999 where I called for a doctrine of international community, and I

repeated the same themes again in the speech to the US Congress in July 2003.

The basic thesis is that the defining characteristic of today's world is its interdependence; that whereas the economics of globalisation are well matured, the politics of globalisation are not; and that unless we articulate a common global policy based on common values, we risk chaos threatening our stability, economic and political, through letting extremism, conflict or injustice go unchecked.

The consequence of this thesis is a policy of engagement rather than isolation; and one that is active not reactive.

And confusingly, its proponents and opponents come from all sides of the political spectrum. So it is apparently a "neo-conservative" ie right wing view, to be ardently in favour of spreading democracy round the world; whilst others on the right take the view that this is dangerous and deluded – that the only thing that matters is an immediate view of national interest. Some progressives see intervention as humanitarian and necessary; others take the view that provided dictators don't threaten our citizens directly, what they do with their own, is up to them.

The debate on world trade has thrown all sides of politics into an orgy of political cross-dressing. Protectionist sentiment is rife on the left; on the right, there are calls for "economic patriotism"; meanwhile some voices left and right, are making the case for free trade not just on grounds of commerce but of justice.

I believe the true division in foreign policy today is between: those who want the shop "open", or those who want it "closed"; those who believe that the long-term interests of a country lie in it being out there, engaged, interactive and those who think the short-term pain of such a policy and its decisions, too great. This division has strong echoes in debates not just about foreign policy and trade but also over immigration.

Progressives may implement different policies differently from conservatives, but across politics the fault lines are the same.

Where progressive and conservative policy can differ is that progressives are stronger on the challenges of poverty, climate change and trade justice. I should say I have no doubt at all it is impossible to gain support for our values, unless the demand for justice is as strong as the demand for freedom; and the willingness to work in partnership with others is an avowed preference to going it alone, even if going it alone may sometimes be necessary.

In particular, I believe we will not ever get real support for the tough action that may well be essential to safeguard our way of life; unless we also attack global poverty or environmental degradation or injustice with equal vigour.

Neither in defending this interventionist policy do I pretend that mistakes have not been made or



that major problems do not confront us and there are many areas in which we have not intervened as effectively as I would wish, even if such intervention was only by political pressure. Sudan, for example; the appalling deterioration in the conditions of the people of Zimbabwe; human rights in Burma; the virtual enslavement of the people of North Korea.

I also want to acknowledge – and shall in a later speech expand on this point – that the state of the Middle East Peace Process and the stand-off between Israel and Palestine remains a, perhaps the, real, genuine source of anger in the Arab and Muslim world that goes far beyond usual anti-western feeling. The issue of “even handedness” rankles deeply. I will set out later how we should respond to Hamas in a way that acknowledges the democratic mandate but seeks to make progress peacefully. But as I say, that is for another speech.

So this is not an attempt to deflect criticism or ignore the huge challenges which remain; but to set out the thinking behind this foreign policy that we have pursued.

Over the next few weeks, I will outline the implication of this agenda in three speeches, including this one. In this, the first, I will describe how I believe we can defeat global terrorism and why I believe victory for democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan is a vital element of doing so. In the second, I shall outline the importance of a broad global alliance to achieve our common goals. In the third, in America, I shall say how the international institutions need radical reform to make them capable of implementing such an agenda, and doing so in a strong and effective multilateral way. But throughout all three, I want to stress why this concept of an international community, based on core, shared values, prepared actively to intervene and resolve problems, is an essential pre-condition of our future prosperity and stability.

It is in confronting global terrorism today that the sharpest debate and disagreement is found. Nowhere is the supposed “folly” of the interventionist case so loudly trumpeted as in this case. Here, so it is said, as the third anniversary of the Iraq conflict takes place, is the wreckage of such a world view. Under Saddam Iraq was “stable”. Now its stability is in the balance. Ergo, it should never have been done.

This is essentially the product of the conventional view of foreign policy since the fall of the Berlin Wall. This view holds that there is no longer a defining issue in foreign policy. Countries should therefore manage their affairs and relationships according to their narrow national interests. The basic posture represented by this view is: not to provoke, to keep all as settled as it can be and cause no tectonic plates to move. It has its soft face in dealing with issues like global warming or Africa; and reserves its hard face only if directly attacked by another state, which is unlikely. It is a view which sees the world as not without challenge but is basically calm, with a few nasty things lurking in deep waters, which it is best to avoid; but no major currents that inevitably threaten the placid surface. It believes the storms of the past few years have been largely self-created.

This is the majority view of a large part of western opinion, certainly in Europe. According to

this opinion, the policy of America since 9/11 has been a gross overreaction; George Bush is as much if not more of a threat to world peace than Osama bin Laden; and what is happening in Iraq, Afghanistan or anywhere else in the Middle East, is an entirely understandable consequence of US/UK imperialism or worse, of just plain stupidity. Leave it all alone or at least treat it with sensitivity and it would all resolve itself in time; “it” never quite being defined, but just generally felt as anything that causes disruption.

This world view – which I would characterise as a doctrine of benign inactivity – sits in the commentator’s seat, almost as a matter of principle. But it has imposed a paradigm on world events that is extraordinary in its attraction and its scope. As we speak, Iraq is facing a crucial moment in its history: to unify and progress, under a government elected by its people for the first time in half a century; or to descend into sectarian strife, bringing a return to certain misery for millions. In Afghanistan, the same life choice for a nation, is being played out. And in many Arab and Muslim states, similar, though less publicised, struggles for democracy dominate their politics.

The effect of this paradigm is to see each setback in Iraq or Afghanistan, each revolting terrorist barbarity, each reverse for the forces of democracy or advance for the forces of tyranny as merely an illustration of the foolishness of our ever being there; as a reason why Saddam should have been left in place or the Taliban free to continue their alliance with Al Qaida. Those who still justify the interventions are treated with scorn.

Then, when terrorists strike in the nations like Britain or Spain, who supported such action, there is a groundswell of opinion formers keen to say, in effect, that it’s hardly surprising – after all, if we do this to “their” countries, is it any wonder they do it to “ours”?

So the statement that Iraq or Afghanistan or Palestine or indeed Chechnya, Kashmir or half a dozen other troublespots is seen by extremists as fertile ground for their recruiting – that statement, a statement of the obvious – is elided with the notion that we have “caused” such recruitment or made terrorism worse, a notion that, on any sane analysis, has the most profound implications for democracy.

The easiest line for any politician seeking office in the West today is to attack American policy. A couple of weeks ago as I was addressing young Slovak students, one got up, denouncing US/UK policy in Iraq, fully bought in to the demonisation of the US, utterly oblivious to the fact that without the US and the liberation of his country, he would have been unable to ask such a question, let alone get an answer to it.

There is an interesting debate going on inside government today about how to counter extremism in British communities. Ministers have been advised never to use the term “Islamist extremist”. It will give offence. It is true. It will. There are those – perfectly decent-minded people – who say the extremists who commit these acts of terrorism are not true Muslims. And, of course, they are right. They are no more proper Muslims than the Protestant bigot who murders a Catholic in

Northern Ireland is a proper Christian. But, unfortunately, he is still a “Protestant” bigot. To say his religion is irrelevant is both completely to misunderstand his motive and to refuse to face up to the strain of extremism within his religion that has given rise to it.

Yet, in respect of radical Islam, the paradigm insists that to say what is true, is to provoke, to show insensitivity, to demonstrate the same qualities of purblind ignorance that leads us to suppose that Muslims view democracy or liberty in the same way we do.

Just as it lets go unchallenged the frequent refrain that it is to be expected that Muslim opinion will react violently to the invasion of Iraq: after all it is a Muslim country. Thus, the attitude of this paradigm is: we understand your sense of grievance; we acknowledge your anger at the invasion of a Muslim country; but to strike back through terrorism is wrong.

I believe that this posture of weakness, defeatism and most of all, deeply insulting to every Muslim who believes in freedom is the majority. Instead of challenging the extremism, this attitude panders to it and therefore instead of choking it, feeds its growth.

None of this means, incidentally, that the invasion of Iraq or Afghanistan was right; merely that it is nonsense to suggest it was done because the countries are Muslim.

I recall the video footage of Mohammed Sadiq Khan, the man who was the ringleader of the 7/7 bombers. There he was, complaining about the suppression of Muslims, the wickedness of America and Britain, calling on all fellow Muslims to fight us. And I thought: here is someone, brought up in this country, free to practise his religion, free to speak out, free to vote, with a good standard of living and every chance to raise a family in a decent way of life, talking about “us”, the British, when his whole experience of “us” that included himself has been the very opposite of the message he is preaching. And in so far as he is angry about Muslims in Iraq or Afghanistan let Iraqi or Afghan Muslims decide whether to be angry or not by ballot.

There was something tragic, terrible but also ridiculous about such a diatribe. He may have been born here. But his ideology wasn't. And that is why it has to be taken on, and taken on everywhere.

This terrorism will not be defeated until its ideas, the poison that warps the minds of its adherents, are confronted, head-on, in their essence, at their core. By this I don't mean telling these extremists that terrorism is wrong. I mean telling them their attitude to America is absurd; their concept of governance pre-feudal; their positions on women and other faiths, reactionary and regressive; and then since only by Muslims can this be done: standing up for and supporting those within Islam who will tell them all of this but more, namely that the extremist view of Islam is not just theologically backward but completely contrary to the spirit and teaching of the Koran.

But in order to do this, we must reject the thought that somehow we are the authors of our own

distress; that if only we altered this decision or that, this extremism would fade away. In my judgement, the only way to win is: to recognise this phenomenon is a global ideology; to see all areas, in which it operates, as linked; and to defeat it by values and ideas set in opposition to those of the terrorists.

The roots of global terrorism and extremism are indeed deep. They reach right down through decades of alienation, victimhood and political oppression in the Arab and Muslim world. Yet this is not and never has been inevitable. The most remarkable thing about reading the Koran – in so far as it can be truly translated from the original Arabic – is to understand how progressive it is. I speak with great diffidence and humility as a member of another faith. I am not qualified to make any judgements. But as an outsider, the Koran strikes me as a reforming book, trying to return Judaism and Christianity to their origins, rather as reformers attempted with the Christian Church centuries later. It is inclusive. It extols science and knowledge and abhors superstition. It is practical and way ahead of its time in attitudes to marriage, women and governance.

Under its guidance, the spread of Islam and its dominance over previously Christian or pagan lands was breathtaking. Over centuries it founded an Empire, leading the world in discovery, art and culture. We look back to the early Middle Ages, The standard bearers of tolerance at that time were far more likely to be found in Muslim lands than in Christian.

This is not the place to digress into a history of what subsequently happened. But by the early 20th century, after renaissance, reformation and enlightenment had swept over the Western world, the Muslim and Arab world was uncertain, insecure and on the defensive. Some countries like Turkey went for a muscular move to secularism. Others found themselves caught between colonisation, nascent nationalism, political oppression and religious radicalism. Muslims began to see the sorry state of Muslim countries as symptomatic of the sorry state of Islam. Political radicals became religious radicals and vice versa. Those in power tried to accommodate the resurgent Islamic radicalism by incorporating some of its leaders and some of its ideology. The result was nearly always disastrous. The religious radicalism was made respectable; the political radicalism suppressed and so in the minds of many, the cause of the two came together to symbolise the need for change. So many came to believe that the way of restoring the confidence and stability of Islam was the combination of religious extremism and populist politics.

In this mindset, the true enemies became “the West” and those Islamic leaders who co-operated with them.

The extremism may have started through religious doctrine and thought. But soon, in offshoots of the Muslim brotherhood, supported by Wahabi extremists and taught in some of the Madrassas of the Middle East and Asia, an ideology was born and exported around the world.

We all know the worst terrorist act was 9/11 in New York and Washington DC in 2001, where three thousand people were murdered. But the reality is that many more had already died not just in acts of terrorism against Western interests, but in political insurrection and turmoil round the

world. Over 100,000 died in Algeria. In Chechnya and Kashmir political causes that could have been resolved became brutally incapable of resolution under the pressure of terrorism. Today, in well over 30 or 40 countries terrorists are plotting action loosely linked with this ideology. My point is this: the roots of this are not superficial, therefore, they are deep, embedded now in the culture of many nations and capable of an eruption at any time.

The different aspects of this terrorism are linked. The struggle against terrorism in Madrid or London or Paris is the same as the struggle against the terrorist acts of Hezbollah in Lebanon or the PIJ in Palestine or rejectionist groups in Iraq. The murder of the innocent in Beslan is part of the same ideology that takes innocent lives in Saudi Arabia, the Yemen or Libya. And when Iran gives support to such terrorism, it becomes part of the same battle with the same ideology at its heart.

True the conventional view is that, for example, Iran is hostile to Al Qaida and therefore would never support its activities. But as we know from our own history of conflict, under the pressure of battle, alliances shift and change. Fundamentally, for this ideology, we are the enemy.

Which brings me to the fundamental point. “We” is not the West. “We” are as much Muslim as Christian or Jew or Hindu. “We” are those who believe in religious tolerance, openness to others, in democracy, liberty and human rights administered by secular courts.

This is not a clash between civilisations. It is a clash about civilisation. It is the age-old battle between progress and reaction, between those who embrace and see opportunity in the modern world and those who reject its existence; between optimism and hope on the one hand; and pessimism and fear on the other. And in the era of globalisation where nations depend on each other and where our security is held in common or not at all, the outcome of this clash between extremism and progress is utterly determinative of our future here in Britain. We can no more opt out of this struggle than we can opt out of the climate changing around us. Inaction, pushing the responsibility on to America, deluding ourselves that this terrorism is an isolated series of individual incidents rather than a global movement and would go away if only we were more sensitive to its pretensions; this attitude too is a policy. It is just that; it is a policy that is profoundly and fundamentally wrong.

And this, in my view, is why the position of so much opinion on how to defeat this terrorism and on the continuing struggle in Iraq and Afghanistan and the Middle East is, in my judgement, so mistaken.

It ignores the true significance of the elections in Iraq and Afghanistan. The fact is: given the chance, the people wanted democracy. OK so they voted on religious or regional lines in many cases. That’s not surprising, given the history. But there’s not much doubt what all the main parties in both countries would prefer and it is neither theocratic nor secular dictatorship. The people – despite violence, intimidation, inexperience and logistical nightmares in voting– voted. Not a few. But in numbers large enough to shame many western democracies. They want

Government decided by the people.

And who is trying to stop them? In Iraq, a mixture of foreign Jihadists, former Saddamists and rejectionist insurgents. In Afghanistan, a combination of drug barons, the Taliban and Al Qaida.

In each case, US, UK and the forces of many other nations are there to help the indigenous security forces grow, to support the democratic process and to provide some clear bulwark against the terrorism that threatens that process. In each case, full UN authority is in place. There was and is a debate about the legality of the original decision to remove Saddam. But since June 2003, the Multi National Force has been in Iraq under a UN resolution and with the authority of the first ever elected Government. In Afghanistan throughout, United Nations authority has been in place.

In both countries, the armed forces and police service are taking shape so that in time a democratically elected government has, under its control, sufficient power to do the will of the democratic state. In each case again, people die queuing up to join such forces, determined whatever the risk, to be part of a new and different dispensation.

Of course, and wholly wrongly, there are abuses of human rights, mistakes made, things done that should not be done. There always were. But at least this time, someone demands redress; people are free to complain.

So here, in its most pure form, is a struggle between democracy and violence. People look back on the three years since the Iraq conflict; they point to the precarious nature of Iraq today and to those who have died – mainly in terrorist acts – and they say: how can it have been worth it?

But there is a different question to ask: why is it so important to the forces of reaction and violence to halt Iraq in its democratic tracks and tip it into sectarian war? Why do foreign terrorists from Al Qaida and its associates go across the border to kill and maim? Why does Syria not take stronger action to prevent them? Why does Iran meddle so furiously in the stability of Iraq?

Examine the propaganda poured into the minds of many of those in the Muslim and Arab world.. Every abuse at Abu Ghraib is exposed in detail; of course it is unacceptable but it is as if the only absence of due process in that part of the world is in prisons run by the Americans. Every conspiracy theory – from seizing Iraqi oil to imperial domination – is lovingly dusted down and repeated.

Why? The answer is that the reactionary elements know the importance of victory or defeat in Iraq. Right from the beginning, to them it was obvious. For sure, errors were made on our side. It is arguable that de-Baathification went too quickly and was spread too indiscriminately, especially amongst the armed forces. Though in parenthesis, the real worry, back in 2003 was a humanitarian crisis, which we avoided; and the pressure at that time was all to de-Baathify faster.



But the basic problem from the murder of the United Nations staff in August 2003 onwards has been simple: security. The reactionary elements have been trying to de-rail both reconstruction and democracy by violence. Power and electricity became problems not through the indolence of either Iraqis or the Multi National Force but through sabotage. People became frightened through terrorism and through criminal gangs, some deliberately released by Saddam.

The point I'm making is this: these were not random acts. They were and are a strategy. When that strategy failed to push the Multi National Force out of Iraq prematurely and failed to stop the voting; they turned to sectarian killing and outrage most notably February's savage and blasphemous destruction of the Shia Shrine at Samarra.

They know that if they can succeed either in Iraq or Afghanistan or indeed in Lebanon or anywhere else wanting to go the democratic route, then the choice of a modern democratic future for the Arab or Muslim world is dealt a potentially mortal blow. Likewise if they fail, and these countries become democracies and make progress and, in the case of Iraq, prosper rapidly as it would; then not merely is that a blow against their whole value system; but it is the most effective message possible against their wretched propaganda about America, or the West, or the rest of the world.

That to me is the painful irony of what is happening. They have so much clearer a sense of what is at stake. They play our own media with a shrewdness that would be the envy of many a political party. Every act of carnage adds to the death toll. But somehow it serves to indicate our responsibility for disorder, rather than the act of wickedness that caused it. For us, so much of our opinion believes that what was done in Iraq in 2003 was so wrong, that it is reluctant to accept what is plainly right now.

What happens in Iraq or Afghanistan today is not just crucial for the people in those countries or even in those regions; but for our security here and round the world. It is a cause that has none of the debatable nature of the original decisions to go for regime change; it is an entirely noble one – to help people in need of our help in pursuit of liberty; and a self-interested one, since in their salvation lies our own security.

Naturally, the debate over the wisdom of the original decisions, especially in respect of Iraq will continue. Opponents will say Iraq was never a threat; there were no WMD; the drug trade in Afghanistan continues. I will point out Iraq was indeed a threat as two regional wars, 14 UN resolutions and the final report of the Iraq Survey Group show; that in the aftermath of the Iraq War we secured major advances on WMD not least the new relationship with Libya and the shutting down of the AQ Khan network; and that it was the Taliban who manipulated the drug trade and in any event housed Al Qaida and its training camps.

But whatever the conclusion to this debate, if there ever is one, the fact is that now, whatever the rights and wrongs of how and why Saddam and the Taliban were removed, there is an obvious, clear and overwhelming reason for supporting the people of those countries in their desire for

democracy.

I might point out too that in both countries supporters of the ideology represented by Saddam and Mullah Omar are free to stand in elections and on the rare occasions they dare to do so, don't win many votes.

Across the Arab and Muslim world such a struggle for democracy and liberty continues. One reason I am so passionate about Turkey's membership of the European Union is precisely because it enhances the possibility of a good outcome to such a struggle. It should be our task to empower and support those in favour of uniting Islam and democracy, everywhere.

But to do this, we must fight the ideas of the extremists, not just their actions; and stand up for and not walk away from those engaged in a life or death battle for freedom. The fact of their courage in doing so should give us courage; their determination should lend us strength; their embrace of democratic values, which do not belong to any race, religion or nation, but are universal, should reinforce our own confidence in those values.

Shortly after Saddam fell, I met in London a woman who after years of exile – and there were some 4 million such exiles – had returned to Iraq to participate in modern politics there. A couple of months later, she was assassinated, one of the first to be so. I cannot tell what she would say now. But I do know it would not be: give up. She would not want her sacrifice for her beliefs to be in vain.

Two years later the same ideology killed people on the streets of London, and for the same reason. To stop cultures, faiths and races living in harmony; to deter those who see greater openness to others as a mark of humanity's progress; to disrupt the very thing that makes London special would in time, if allowed to, set Iraq on a course of progress too.

This is, ultimately, a battle about modernity. Some of it can only be conducted and won within Islam itself. But don't let us in our desire not to speak of what we can only imperfectly understand; or our wish not to trespass on sensitive feelings, end up accepting the very premise of the people fighting us.

The extremism is not the true voice of Islam. Neither is that voice necessarily to be found in those who are from one part only of Islamic thought, however assertively that voice makes itself heard. It is, as ever, to be found in the calm, but too often unheard beliefs of the many Muslims, millions of them the world over, including in Europe, who want what we all want: to be ourselves free and for others to be free also; who regard tolerance as a virtue and respect for the faith of others as part of our own faith. That, for me, is what this battle is about, within Islam and outside of it; it is a battle of values and of progress; and therefore it is one we must win.

Thank you.

## APPENDIX B: Validating the Heroic Rhetoric Dictionary

### *1. Results of Hand-coding of Sample Texts for Presence of Heroic Imagery*

#### *Little or no heroic imagery:*

2000 Statement on Deferring Deportation of Liberian Refugees  
1989 Remarks at the Annual White House News Photographers Association Dinner  
1993 Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Turgut Ozal of Turkey  
1982 Statement on Signing a Bill Concerning the Cumberland Island Wilderness Area and Crater Lake National Park

#### *Some heroic imagery:*

1981 Remarks on Action by the House of Representatives on Federal Budget Legislation  
2001 Remarks on Plans for Release of United States Navy Aircraft Crewmembers in China  
1995 Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Farmers and Agricultural Leaders in Broadview, Montana  
1998 Remarks Announcing Proposed Legislation on Child Care  
1996 Remarks in Sunrise, Florida  
2001 Remarks at a Reading Roundtable  
1985 Remarks to the United States Delegation to the United Nations Conference on Women  
1996 Remarks in Houston, Texas  
1996 Remarks at a Democratic Dinner in San Francisco, California  
1992 Remarks at the State Fair in Raleigh, North Carolina

#### *Significant heroic imagery:*

1994 Remarks Honoring the NCAA Champion Lake Superior State University Hockey Team  
1988 Remarks at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Center for Public Affairs in Simi Valley, California  
1995 Remarks on Receiving the Abraham Lincoln Courage Award in Chicago  
1990 Remarks at a Luncheon Commemorating the Dwight D. Eisenhower Centennial  
1990 Remarks at the Annual Meeting of the Boards of Governors of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group  
2002 Exchange With Reporters at Fort Bragg, North Carolina  
1986 Remarks and an Informal Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With David Jacobsen  
1985 Remarks to Veterans of the Battle of Iwo Jima  
2000 Message on the Observance of Yom Kippur, 2000  
1988 Remarks at a Ceremony Commemorating German-American Day  
2005 Remarks on the Nomination of Michael Chertoff To Be Secretary of Homeland Security

## 2. Results from Machine-Coding of Texts Using Heroic Rhetoric Dictionary

2000 Statement on Deferring Deportation of Liberian Refugees	0
1981 Remarks on Action by the House of Representatives on Federal Budget Legislation	0.0022
2001 Remarks on Plans for Release of United States Navy Aircraft Crewmembers in China	0.0046
1989 Remarks at the Annual White House News Photographers Association Dinner	0.0047
1995 Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Farmers and Agricultural Leaders in Broadview, Montana	0.0059
1998 Remarks Announcing Proposed Legislation on Child Care	0.0074
1996Remarks in Sunrise, Florida	0.0086
2001 Remarks at a Reading Roundtable	0.0087
1993 Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Turgut Ozal of Turkey	0.0091
1985 Remarks to the United States Delegation to the United Nations Conference on Women	0.0102
1996 Remarks in Houston, Texas	0.0102
1996 Remarks at a Democratic Dinner in San Francisco, California	0.0105
1982 Statement on Signing a Bill Concerning the Cumberland Island Wilderness Area and Crater Lake National Park	0.0106
1994 Remarks Honoring the NCAA Champion Lake Superior State University Hockey Team	0.0109
1988 Remarks at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Center for Public Affairs in Simi Valley, California	0.0119
1992 Remarks at the State Fair in Raleigh, North Carolina	0.0124
1995 Remarks on Receiving the Abraham Lincoln Courage Award in Chicago	0.0127
1990 Remarks at a Luncheon Commemorating the Dwight D. Eisenhower Centennial	0.0159
1990 Remarks at the Annual Meeting of the Boards of Governors of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group	0.0162
2002 Exchange With Reporters at Fort Bragg, North Carolina	0.0207
1986 Remarks and an Informal Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With David Jacobsen	0.0219
1985 Remarks to Veterans of the Battle of Iwo Jima	0.0296
2000 Message on the Observance of Yom Kippur, 2000	0.03
1988 Remarks at a Ceremony Commemorating German-American Day	0.0439
2005 Remarks on the Nomination of Michael Chertoff To Be Secretary of Homeland Security	0.0449

## APPENDIX C: Correlations Among Annual Presidential Country Mentions

	1981	1982	1983	1984	Reagan.Term1
1981	1	0.8166	0.736	0.7791	0.8575
1982	0.8166	1	0.8432	0.8713	0.9487
1983	0.736	0.8432	1	0.8619	0.9451
1984	0.7791	0.8713	0.8619	1	0.953
Reagan.Term1	0.8575	0.9487	0.9451	0.953	1
1985	0.7692	0.8569	0.7925	0.8692	0.8839
1986	0.6686	0.7061	0.7292	0.7834	0.7799
1987	0.8113	0.8202	0.7738	0.822	0.8586
1988	0.7808	0.85	0.7971	0.862	0.8829
Reagan.Term2	0.7796	0.8316	0.7964	0.859	0.8765
1989	0.7319	0.7694	0.6414	0.7473	0.765
1990	0.6002	0.6757	0.5451	0.639	0.6544
1991	0.684	0.7324	0.6536	0.6967	0.7369
1992	0.5679	0.4905	0.5606	0.4927	0.5591
Bush.I	0.7329	0.7702	0.6781	0.7404	0.776
1993	0.3817	0.2692	0.3754	0.3159	0.3537
1994	0.3958	0.3515	0.3865	0.3698	0.3989
1995	0.3946	0.2935	0.335	0.316	0.3484
1996	0.48	0.358	0.4355	0.4082	0.4409
Clinton.Term1	0.4401	0.3438	0.4116	0.379	0.4143
1997	0.4897	0.412	0.3678	0.4585	0.4492
1998	0.3993	0.2335	0.3278	0.419	0.3609
1999	0.4154	0.363	0.3295	0.4407	0.4066
2000	0.3734	0.2693	0.3098	0.3954	0.354
Clinton.Term2	0.4506	0.337	0.361	0.4646	0.4223
2001	0.5035	0.4119	0.3731	0.4417	0.4478
2002	0.422	0.2973	0.3008	0.3143	0.3408
2003	0.1296	0.0656	0.0859	0.0807	0.0905
2004	0.1171	0.0588	0.068	0.0726	0.0781
2005	0.184	0.1242	0.1525	0.1463	0.1573
Bush2	0.1965	0.1243	0.138	0.1427	0.1529

	1985	1986	1987	1988	Reagan.Term2
1981	0.7692	0.6686	0.8113	0.7808	0.7796
1982	0.8569	0.7061	0.8202	0.85	0.8316
1983	0.7925	0.7292	0.7738	0.7971	0.7964
1984	0.8692	0.7834	0.822	0.862	0.859
Reagan.Term1	0.8839	0.7799	0.8586	0.8829	0.8765
1985	1	0.9017	0.9207	0.9496	0.9705
1986	0.9017	1	0.8991	0.8999	0.9547
1987	0.9207	0.8991	1	0.9594	0.9738
1988	0.9496	0.8999	0.9594	1	0.9817
Reagan.Term2	0.9705	0.9547	0.9738	0.9817	1
1989	0.7308	0.5918	0.6925	0.7225	0.704
1990	0.6872	0.5524	0.6566	0.6709	0.66
1991	0.7135	0.6114	0.7357	0.7415	0.7213
1992	0.4825	0.4168	0.517	0.5256	0.5002
Bush.I	0.7564	0.6266	0.7488	0.7654	0.7454
1993	0.2779	0.2428	0.2953	0.3003	0.2875
1994	0.3555	0.2528	0.2931	0.2957	0.3068
1995	0.2964	0.2401	0.3155	0.2806	0.2909
1996	0.3226	0.245	0.3085	0.2778	0.2959
Clinton.Term1	0.3412	0.2655	0.3255	0.3132	0.3197
1997	0.3957	0.2711	0.3408	0.3195	0.3397
1998	0.3044	0.2653	0.2478	0.2225	0.2666
1999	0.4092	0.2728	0.2952	0.2968	0.3256
2000	0.3363	0.2493	0.2081	0.2161	0.258
Clinton.Term2	0.3895	0.2884	0.2905	0.2811	0.3197
2001	0.3843	0.2507	0.3028	0.3434	0.3285
2002	0.2528	0.1715	0.2376	0.2461	0.233
2003	0.0858	0.0747	0.1038	0.0672	0.0849
2004	0.0597	0.0568	0.1109	0.0826	0.08
2005	0.1224	0.0853	0.1539	0.112	0.1213
Bush2	0.1238	0.0949	0.1507	0.1228	0.1264



	1989	1990	1991	1992	Bush.I
1981	0.7319	0.6002	0.684	0.5679	0.7329
1982	0.7694	0.6757	0.7324	0.4905	0.7702
1983	0.6414	0.5451	0.6536	0.5606	0.6781
1984	0.7473	0.639	0.6967	0.4927	0.7404
Reagan.Term1	0.765	0.6544	0.7369	0.5591	0.776
1985	0.7308	0.6872	0.7135	0.4825	0.7564
1986	0.5918	0.5524	0.6114	0.4168	0.6266
1987	0.6925	0.6566	0.7357	0.517	0.7488
1988	0.7225	0.6709	0.7415	0.5256	0.7654
Reagan.Term2	0.704	0.66	0.7213	0.5002	0.7454
1989	1	0.7525	0.6211	0.562	0.8383
1990	0.7525	1	0.8742	0.6276	0.9514
1991	0.6211	0.8742	1	0.6732	0.9195
1992	0.562	0.6276	0.6732	1	0.7765
Bush.I	0.8383	0.9514	0.9195	0.7765	1
1993	0.3213	0.3509	0.4158	0.839	0.5021
1994	0.4103	0.4268	0.4316	0.7677	0.5442
1995	0.3267	0.3701	0.3983	0.6924	0.4768
1996	0.3378	0.3572	0.4218	0.6706	0.4783
Clinton.Term1	0.3832	0.4118	0.4515	0.8108	0.5461
1997	0.5358	0.5366	0.4753	0.717	0.6209
1998	0.3411	0.3794	0.3908	0.5282	0.4501
1999	0.488	0.4551	0.3794	0.5825	0.5233
2000	0.322	0.2842	0.2615	0.4315	0.3521
Clinton.Term2	0.4465	0.4384	0.4019	0.6005	0.5168
2001	0.444	0.4201	0.4131	0.669	0.5262
2002	0.2859	0.4731	0.5563	0.6145	0.5368
2003	0.0638	0.4629	0.5643	0.344	0.4241
2004	0.0479	0.441	0.5454	0.3234	0.4021
2005	0.1384	0.5166	0.6041	0.4204	0.4903
Bush2	0.1238	0.4968	0.5945	0.4225	0.4767

	1993	1994	1995	1996	Clinton.Term1
1981	0.3817	0.3958	0.3946	0.48	0.4401
1982	0.2692	0.3515	0.2935	0.358	0.3438
1983	0.3754	0.3865	0.335	0.4355	0.4116
1984	0.3159	0.3698	0.316	0.4082	0.379
Reagan.Term1	0.3537	0.3989	0.3484	0.4409	0.4143
1985	0.2779	0.3555	0.2964	0.3226	0.3412
1986	0.2428	0.2528	0.2401	0.245	0.2655
1987	0.2953	0.2931	0.3155	0.3085	0.3255
1988	0.3003	0.2957	0.2806	0.2778	0.3132
Reagan.Term2	0.2875	0.3068	0.2909	0.2959	0.3197
1989	0.3213	0.4103	0.3267	0.3378	0.3832
1990	0.3509	0.4268	0.3701	0.3572	0.4118
1991	0.4158	0.4316	0.3983	0.4218	0.4515
1992	0.839	0.7677	0.6924	0.6706	0.8108
Bush.I	0.5021	0.5442	0.4768	0.4783	0.5461
1993	1	0.8218	0.8124	0.7557	0.9213
1994	0.8218	1	0.7884	0.7928	0.9367
1995	0.8124	0.7884	1	0.8921	0.9297
1996	0.7557	0.7928	0.8921	1	0.9113
Clinton.Term1	0.9213	0.9367	0.9297	0.9113	1
1997	0.7624	0.7882	0.7922	0.7815	0.8432
1998	0.5833	0.6158	0.6001	0.7003	0.669
1999	0.6205	0.7323	0.6897	0.715	0.7455
2000	0.5019	0.5777	0.4958	0.5933	0.5859
Clinton.Term2	0.6585	0.7281	0.6876	0.7535	0.7618
2001	0.6934	0.6913	0.5917	0.6417	0.7128
2002	0.5731	0.554	0.4859	0.5822	0.5927
2003	0.2358	0.2568	0.2432	0.2757	0.2719
2004	0.2112	0.1875	0.2164	0.2206	0.2227
2005	0.3132	0.3302	0.3092	0.342	0.349
Bush2	0.3199	0.3177	0.3087	0.3385	0.3456

	1997	1998	1999	2000	Clinton.Term2
1981	0.4897	0.3993	0.4154	0.3734	0.4506
1982	0.412	0.2335	0.363	0.2693	0.337
1983	0.3678	0.3278	0.3295	0.3098	0.361
1984	0.4585	0.419	0.4407	0.3954	0.4646
Reagan.Term1	0.4492	0.3609	0.4066	0.354	0.4223
1985	0.3957	0.3044	0.4092	0.3363	0.3895
1986	0.2711	0.2653	0.2728	0.2493	0.2884
1987	0.3408	0.2478	0.2952	0.2081	0.2905
1988	0.3195	0.2225	0.2968	0.2161	0.2811
Reagan.Term2	0.3397	0.2666	0.3256	0.258	0.3197
1989	0.5358	0.3411	0.488	0.322	0.4465
1990	0.5366	0.3794	0.4551	0.2842	0.4384
1991	0.4753	0.3908	0.3794	0.2615	0.4019
1992	0.717	0.5282	0.5825	0.4315	0.6005
Bush.I	0.6209	0.4501	0.5233	0.3521	0.5168
1993	0.7624	0.5833	0.6205	0.5019	0.6585
1994	0.7882	0.6158	0.7323	0.5777	0.7281
1995	0.7922	0.6001	0.6897	0.4958	0.6876
1996	0.7815	0.7003	0.715	0.5933	0.7535
Clinton.Term1	0.8432	0.669	0.7455	0.5859	0.7618
1997	1	0.7537	0.8432	0.6595	0.8688
1998	0.7537	1	0.7823	0.8362	0.9346
1999	0.8432	0.7823	1	0.7824	0.9286
2000	0.6595	0.8362	0.7824	1	0.9122
Clinton.Term2	0.8688	0.9346	0.9286	0.9122	1
2001	0.795	0.6219	0.6986	0.6251	0.7356
2002	0.6086	0.5738	0.4601	0.4262	0.5577
2003	0.2746	0.4124	0.1903	0.1733	0.2902
2004	0.2119	0.3118	0.0964	0.0677	0.1881
2005	0.369	0.456	0.2539	0.2182	0.3538
Bush2	0.3533	0.4372	0.2363	0.2037	0.3354

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Bush2
1981	0.5035	0.422	0.1296	0.1171	0.184	0.1965
1982	0.4119	0.2973	0.0656	0.0588	0.1242	0.1243
1983	0.3731	0.3008	0.0859	0.068	0.1525	0.138
1984	0.4417	0.3143	0.0807	0.0726	0.1463	0.1427
Reagan.Term1	0.4478	0.3408	0.0905	0.0781	0.1573	0.1529
1985	0.3843	0.2528	0.0858	0.0597	0.1224	0.1238
1986	0.2507	0.1715	0.0747	0.0568	0.0853	0.0949
1987	0.3028	0.2376	0.1038	0.1109	0.1539	0.1507
1988	0.3434	0.2461	0.0672	0.0826	0.112	0.1228
Reagan.Term2	0.3285	0.233	0.0849	0.08	0.1213	0.1264
1989	0.444	0.2859	0.0638	0.0479	0.1384	0.1238
1990	0.4201	0.4731	0.4629	0.441	0.5166	0.4968
1991	0.4131	0.5563	0.5643	0.5454	0.6041	0.5945
1992	0.669	0.6145	0.344	0.3234	0.4204	0.4225
Bush.I	0.5262	0.5368	0.4241	0.4021	0.4903	0.4767
1993	0.6934	0.5731	0.2358	0.2112	0.3132	0.3199
1994	0.6913	0.554	0.2568	0.1875	0.3302	0.3177
1995	0.5917	0.4859	0.2432	0.2164	0.3092	0.3087
1996	0.6417	0.5822	0.2757	0.2206	0.342	0.3385
Clinton.Term1	0.7128	0.5927	0.2719	0.2227	0.349	0.3456
1997	0.795	0.6086	0.2746	0.2119	0.369	0.3533
1998	0.6219	0.5738	0.4124	0.3118	0.456	0.4372
1999	0.6986	0.4601	0.1903	0.0964	0.2539	0.2363
2000	0.6251	0.4262	0.1733	0.0677	0.2182	0.2037
Clinton.Term2	0.7356	0.5577	0.2902	0.1881	0.3538	0.3354
2001	1	0.804	0.2861	0.2978	0.3654	0.4219
2002	0.804	1	0.7256	0.7417	0.7734	0.8233
2003	0.2861	0.7256	1	0.9643	0.9805	0.9789
2004	0.2978	0.7417	0.9643	1	0.9617	0.9823
2005	0.3654	0.7734	0.9805	0.9617	1	0.9869
Bush2	0.4219	0.8233	0.9789	0.9823	0.9869	1

## APPENDIX D: Top 25 Countries Mentioned Per Year

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
	Soviet	Soviet	Soviet	Soviet	Soviet	Soviet	Soviet	Soviet
	Iran	Lebanon	Lebanon	China	Nicaragua	Nicaragua	Iran	Nicaragua
	Poland	Israel	Japan	Lebanon	Israel	Japan	Nicaragua	Japan
	Canada	Poland	Korea	Israel	South Africa	Libya	Japan	Canada
					South			
	Israel	Germany	Israel	Nicaragua	Germany	Africa	Afghanistan	Afghanistan
	Japan	Brazil	El Salvador	Grenada	Iran	Philippines	Canada	Iran
		Afghanista						
	China	n	Cuba	El Salvador	Canada	Iran	Germany	Israel
	Afghanistan	Iran	Nicaragua	Cuba	Japan	Cuba	Libya	Germany
	Cuba	El Salvador	Syria	Japan	Afghanistan	Iceland	Israel	Korea
	Germany	Italy	Germany	Afghanistan	Spain	Mexico	Italy	Panama
	Saudi	Argentina	Mexico	Poland	Cuba	Grenada	Cuba	Cuba
	Mexico	Mexico	Poland	Vietnam	Korea	El Salvador	Russia	Russia
						Afghanista		
	Vietnam	Costa	Iran	France	El Salvador	n	Korea	Mexico
	Egypt	Cuba	Grenada	Iran	Italy	Germany	Guatemala	Turkey
	Korea	Egypt	China	Syria	Honduras	Vietnam	Sweden	Vietnam
	El Salvador	Japan	Italy	Italy	Lebanon	Honduras	Iraq	Italy
	Venezuela	Russia	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Portugal	Indonesia	Philippines	Egypt
	Libya	Honduras	Russia	Russia	Egypt	Israel	France	Cambodia
	France	France	Egypt	Korea	Vietnam	Canada	Romania	Angola
	Turkey	Vietnam	Vietnam	Germany	China	China	China	Libya
	Australia	Jamaica	Australia	Canada	Russia	Cambodia	Poland	Lebanon
	Italy	China	Honduras	South Africa	Turkey	Russia	El Salvador	Grenada
	Russia	Nicaragua	Costa	Mexico	France	Korea	Brazil	China
	Jamaica	Colombia	Canada	Egypt	Poland	Lebanon	Angola	Guatemala
	Spain	Taiwan	France	Venezuela	Angola	France	Lebanon	France

1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Soviet	Soviet	Soviet	Japan	Russia	Russia	Bosnia	Israel	China
Poland	Iraq	Iraq	Russia	Japan	Haiti	Japan	Bosnia	Russia
China	Kuwait	Kuwait	Soviet	Somalia	Korea	Russia	Russia	Mexico
Panama	Germany	Israel	Korea	Mexico	Israel	Mexico	Japan	Bosnia
Hungary	Panama	Japan	Iraq	Bosnia	Bosnia	Israel	Iran	Israel
Germany	Japan	Mexico	Mexico	Haiti	Japan	Haiti	Korea	Japan
Japan	Nicaragua	Turkey	Germany	Korea	Ukraine	Iran	Cuba	Iran
					South			
Korea	Lithuania	Canada	Australia	Israel	Africa	Iraq	Iraq	Brazil
Nicaragua	China	Greece	Israel	China	Iraq	Korea	China	Iraq
Colombia	Saudi	Iran	Haiti	Canada	Germany	Canada	Haiti	Korea
Iran	Mexico	China	Canada	Iraq	China	Germany	Lebanon	Cuba
Canada	Poland	Korea	Poland	Germany	Syria	Cuba	Italy	Canada
	Czechoslovak					Yugoslavia		
Malta	ak	Germany	Ukraine	Italy	Poland	a	Libya	Chile
Cuba	Israel	Russia	Cuba	Soviet	Italy	China	Australia	Argentina
			Yugoslavia					
Mexico	Uruguay	Uruguay	a	Vietnam	Mexico	Libya	Vietnam	Haiti
Lebanon	Iran	Cyprus	Kuwait	Cuba	Cuba	Ukraine	Mexico	Romania
Israel	Chile	Saudi	Vietnam	Egypt	Soviet	Egypt	France	Poland
		South						
El Salvador	Canada	Africa	Bosnia	Serbia	Somalia	Croatia	Greece	Ukraine
	South							
Italy	Africa	Cuba	Panama	Iran	Libya	Vietnam	Saudi	Spain
				South				
Libya	Argentina	France	Uruguay	Africa	Rwanda	Soviet	Syria	France
Vietnam	France	Lebanon	Chile	Turkey	Canada	Serbia	Germany	Germany
			Kazakhstan	Yugoslavia		South		
Costa	Hungary	Ukraine	n	a	Philippines	Africa	Turkey	Venezuela
France	Brazil	Libya	Iran	Argentina	Lebanon	Brazil	Thailand	Taiwan
Afghanistan	Colombia	Yugoslavia	Sri Lanka	Uruguay	Yugoslavia	Pakistan	Egypt	Hungary
Philippines	Venezuela	Poland	China	France	Latvia	Angola	Rwanda	Italy

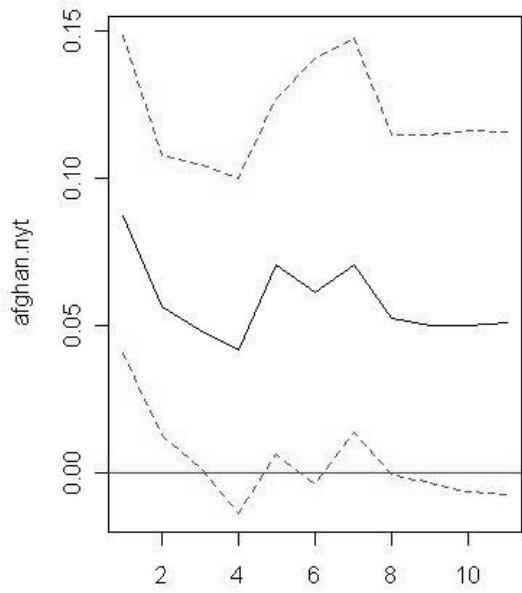


1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
China	China	China	Russia	Iraq	Iraq	Iraq	Iraq
Iraq	Russia	Vietnam	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Afghanistan
Japan	Serbia	Russia	Mexico	Russia	Korea	Japan	Korea
Russia	Bosnia	Israel	China	Israel	Israel	Libya	China
Korea	Israel	Colombia	Israel	Mexico	Australia	Israel	Iran
Israel	Japan	Korea	Korea	Korea	Iran	Mexico	Russia
Bosnia	Albania	Nigeria	Canada	China	Russia	Pakistan	Israel
Cuba	Turkey	Mexico	Japan	Cuba	Philippines	Korea	Japan
Iran	Korea	Japan	Iraq	Poland	Japan	Saudi	Lebanon
South Africa	Germany	Bosnia	Cuba	Pakistan	Kenya	Iran	Syria
Pakistan	Italy	Serbia	Pakistan	Canada	Liberia	Canada	Ukraine
Mexico	Greece	Pakistan	Poland	Japan	Poland	China	Germany
Chile	Indonesia	South Africa	Macedonia	Peru	China	Italy	Mexico
Germany	Yugoslavia	Bangladesh	Italy	Iran	Cuba	Russia	Pakistan
Colombia	Cuba	Cuba	Spain	Colombia	Indonesia	Cuba	Brazil
Hungary	Macedonia	Yugoslavia	Germany	Germany	Italy	Germany	France
Italy	Nigeria	Germany	Vietnam	Romania	Pakistan	Australia	Egypt
Rwanda	Canada	Taiwan	Argentina	Saudi	Germany	France	Saudi
Czech	Mexico	Ukraine	Colombia	Egypt	France	Poland	Indonesia
Indonesia	France	Canada	Iran	Philippines	Thailand	Sudan	Latvia
Uganda	Iraq	Syria	Yugoslavia	El Salvador	Syria	Chile	Panama
Serbia	Pakistan	Iran	Australia	France	Zimbabwe	Turkey	Mongolia
Ghana	Iran	Italy	Egypt	Czech	Turkey	Kuwait	Colombia
Sudan	Colombia	Egypt	Soviet	Lithuania	South Africa	Vietnam	Sudan
Kenya	Hungary	Somalia	Sudan	Sudan	Saudi	Colombia	Poland

## APPENDIX E: Impulse Response Function Graphs

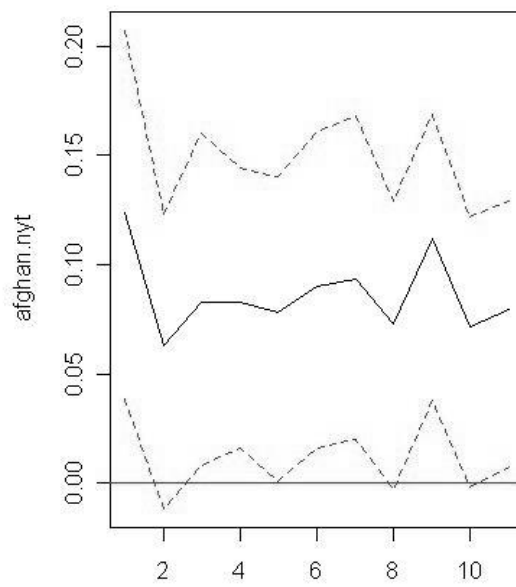
The following graphs are organized in the following manner. The first 25 pages (241-266) represent the IRFs I performed to see the effects of presidential speech and presidential heroic rhetoric used in connection with each country on NYT articles about those countries. The second 25 pages (267-291) represent the IRFs I performed to see the relative effects of presidential speeches high and low in heroic rhetoric on NYT articles about each country. The next three pages (292-294) represent the IRFs I performed to see the relative effects of presidential speeches high and low in heroic rhetoric on NYT articles during six pre-crisis periods. The final group of pages represent the IRFs I performed to look at the relative influence of presidential speech, presidential heroic rhetoric, and media attention on Congressional agendas.

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.speech



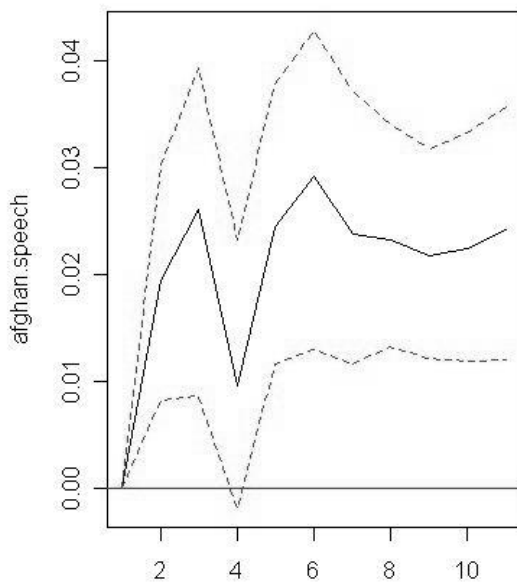
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.hr



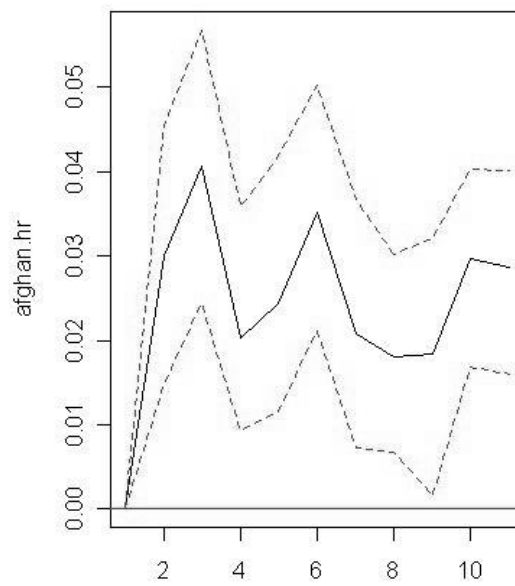
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.nyt

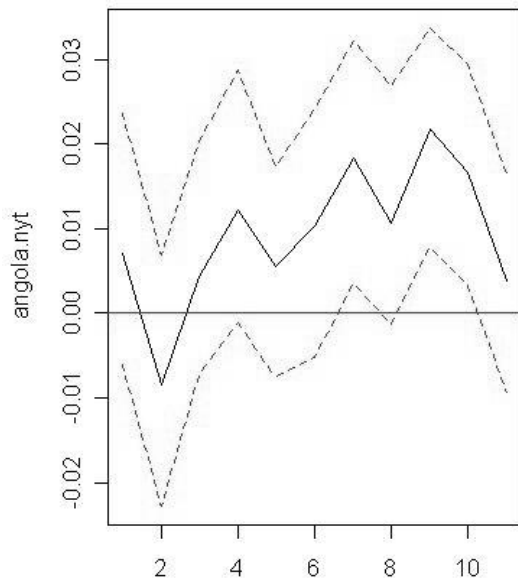


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Afghan Speech/Afghan NYT, 7 lags

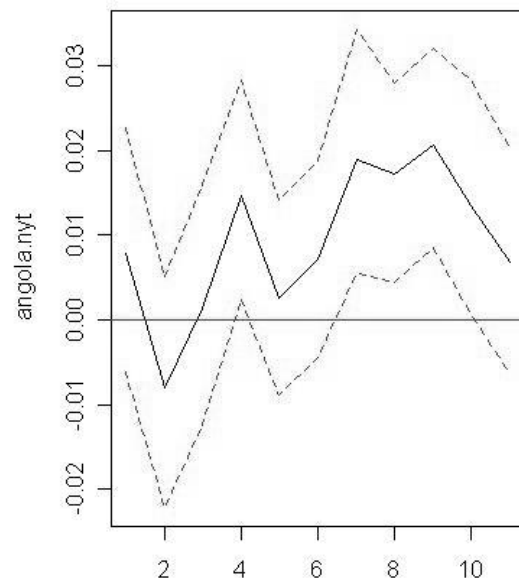
Afghan Heroic Rhetoric/Afghan NYT, 9 lags

Orthogonal Impulse Response from angola.speech



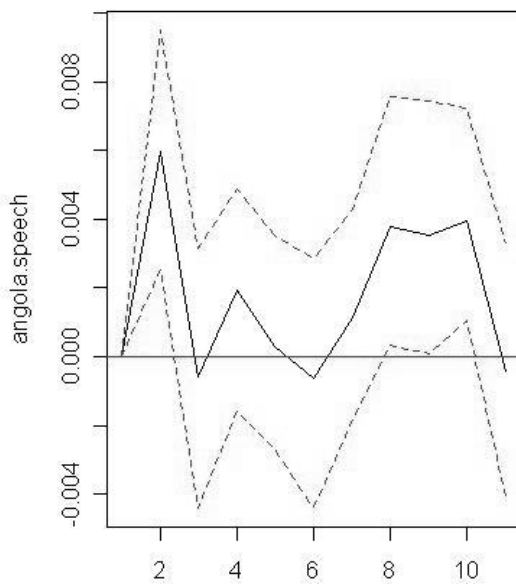
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from angola.hr



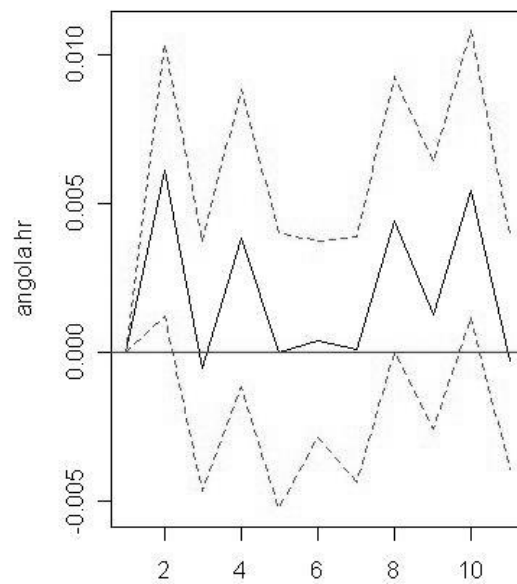
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from angola.nyf



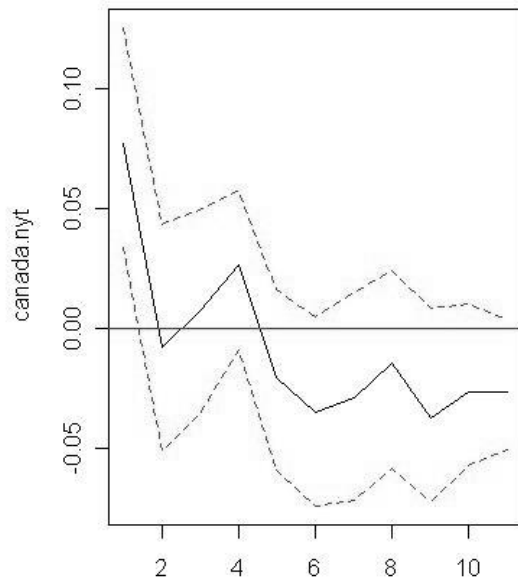
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from angola.nyf



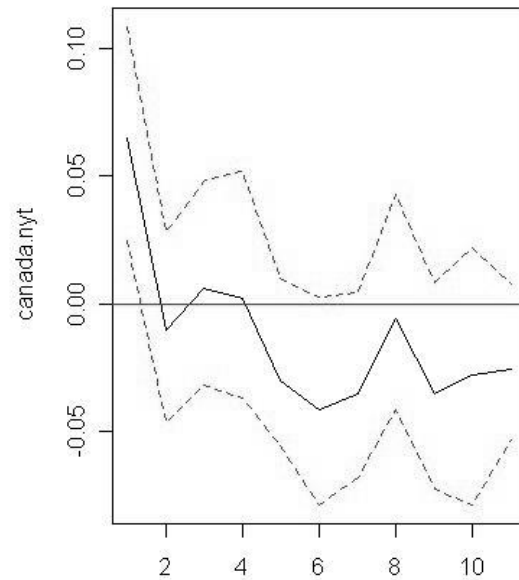
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.speech



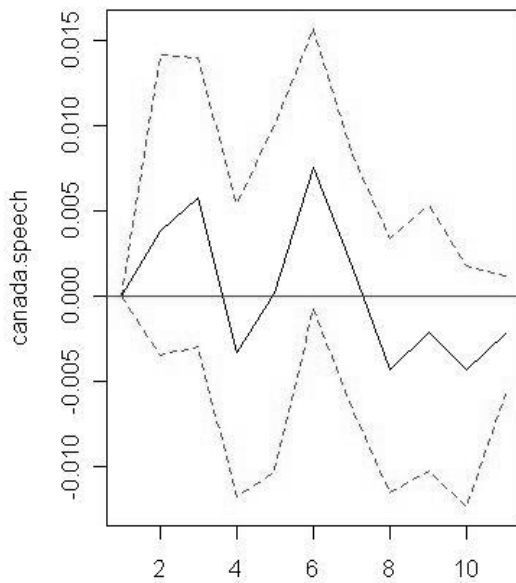
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.hr



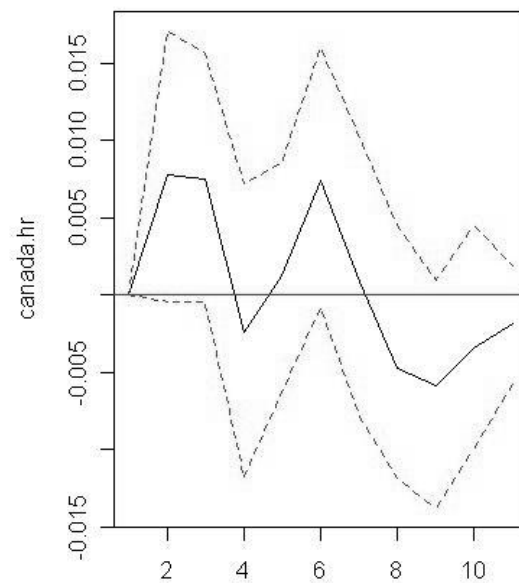
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.nyt



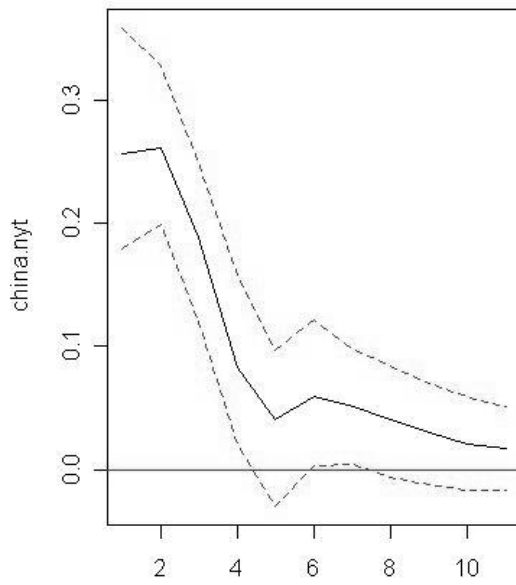
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.nyt



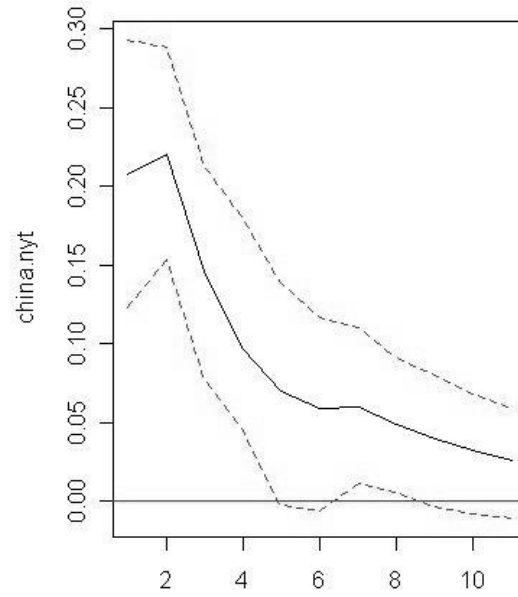
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.speech



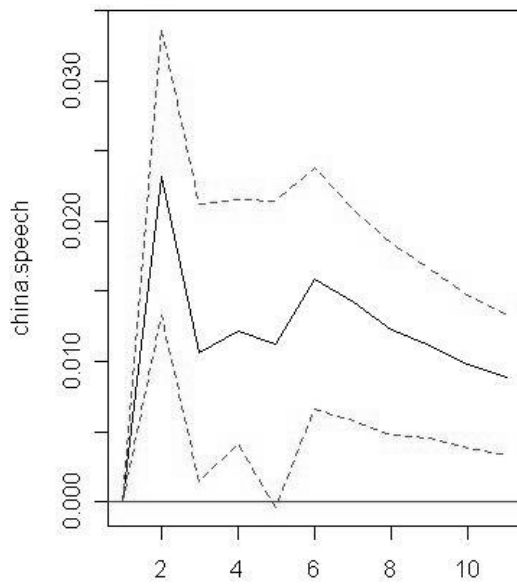
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.hr



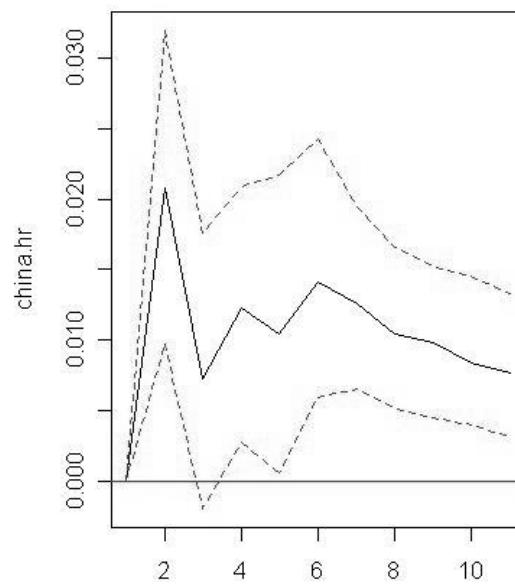
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

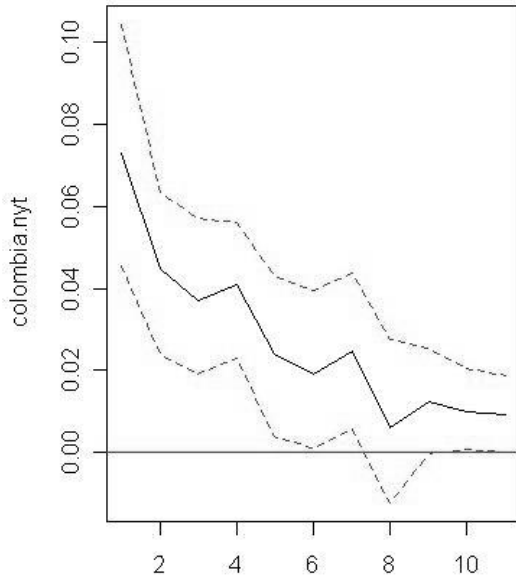
Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

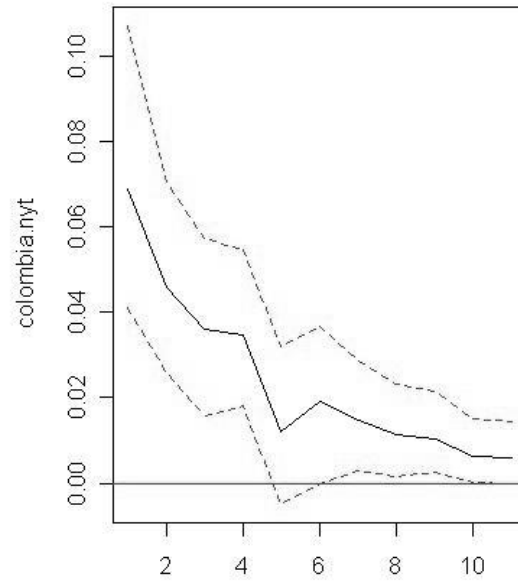


Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.speech



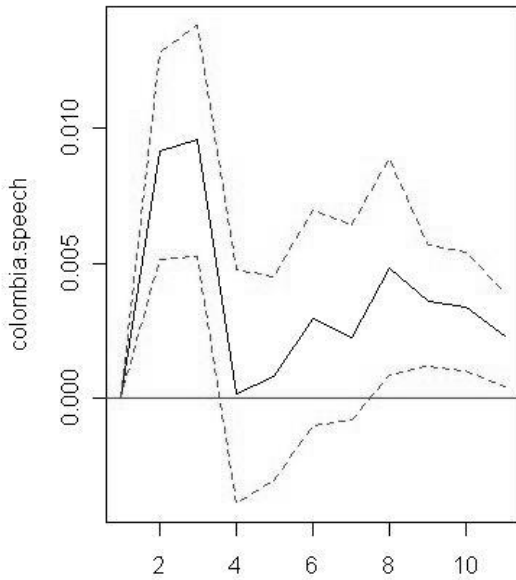
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.hr



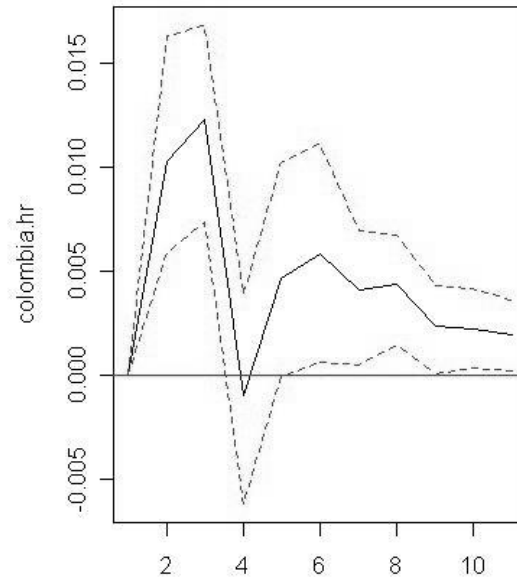
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.ny



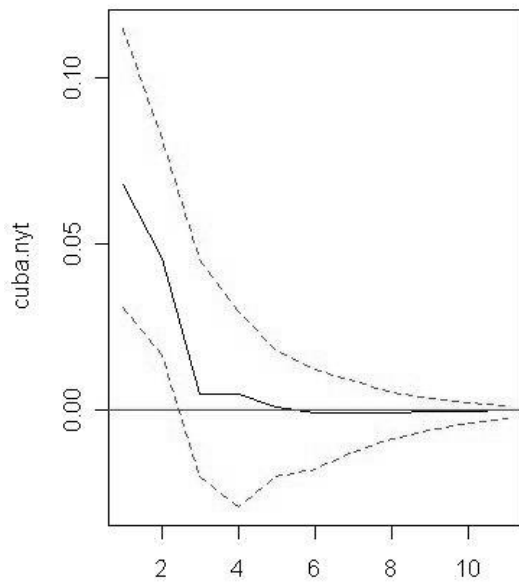
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.ny



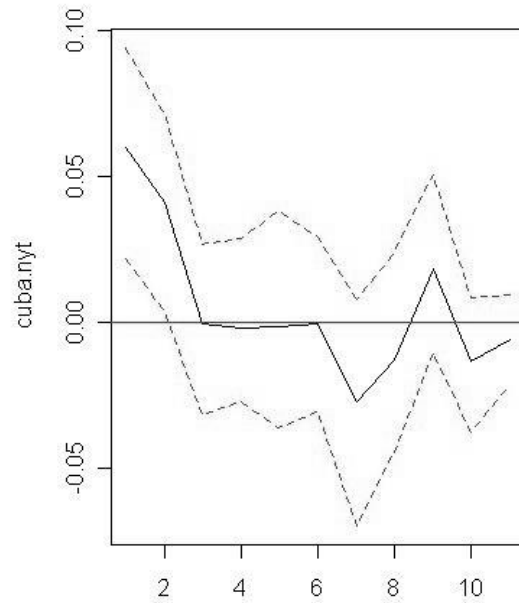
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.speech



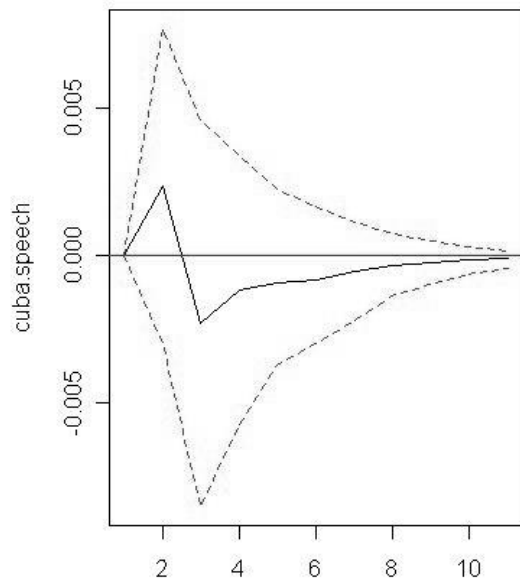
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.hr



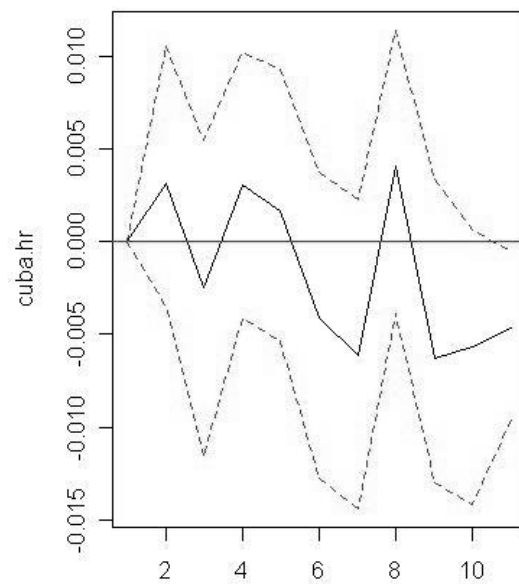
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.nyf



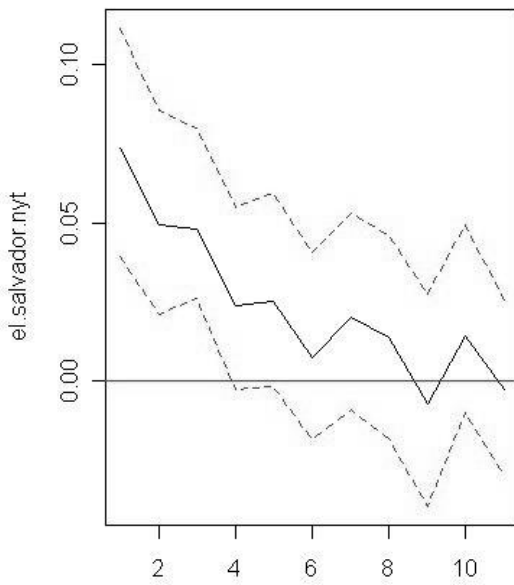
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.nyf



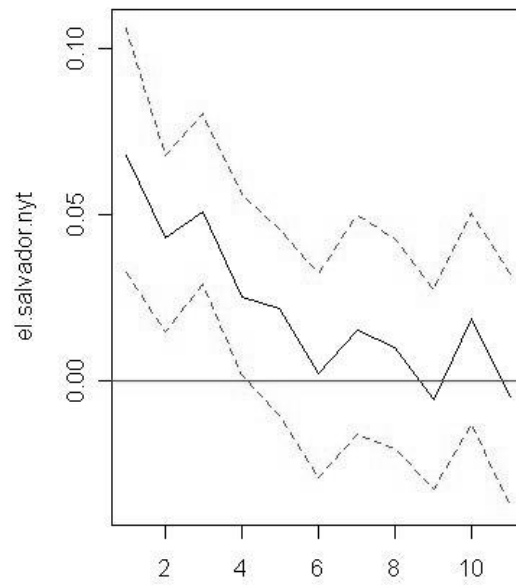
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.speech



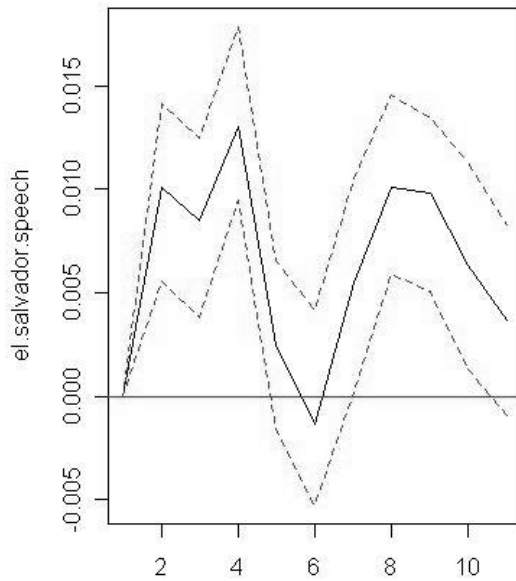
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.hr



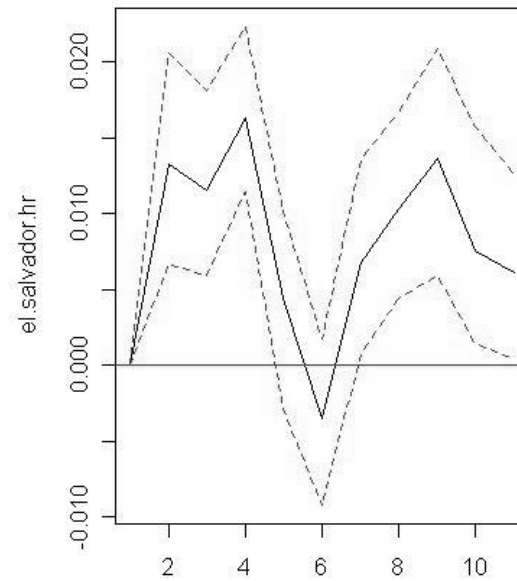
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.nyf



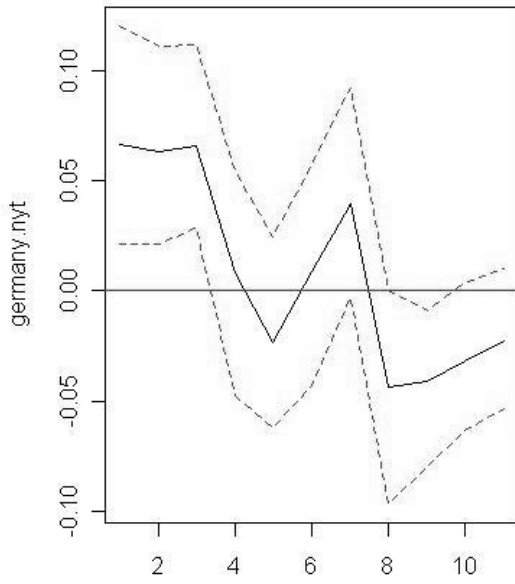
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.nyf



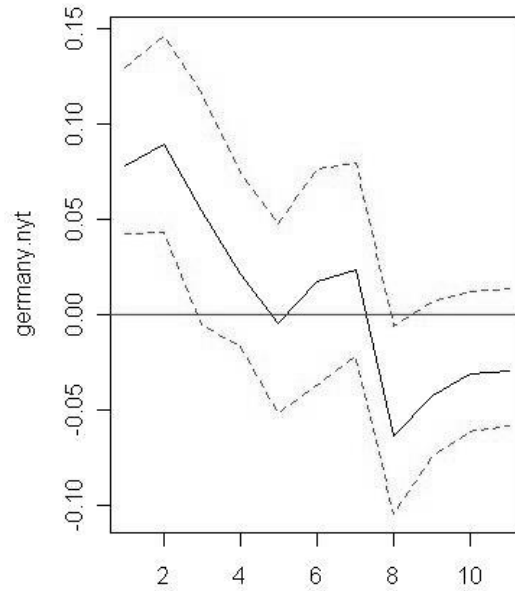
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.speech



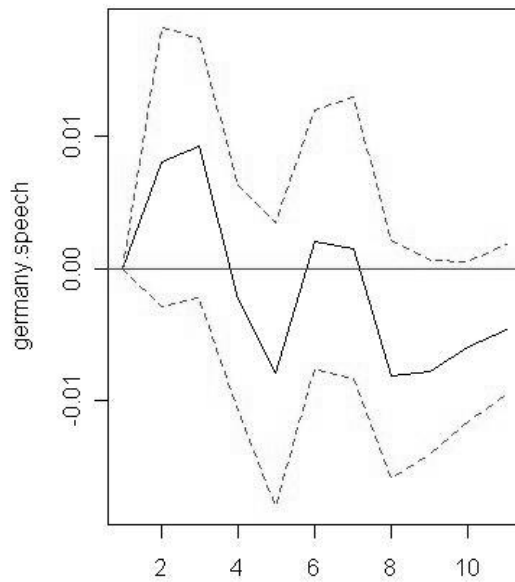
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.hr



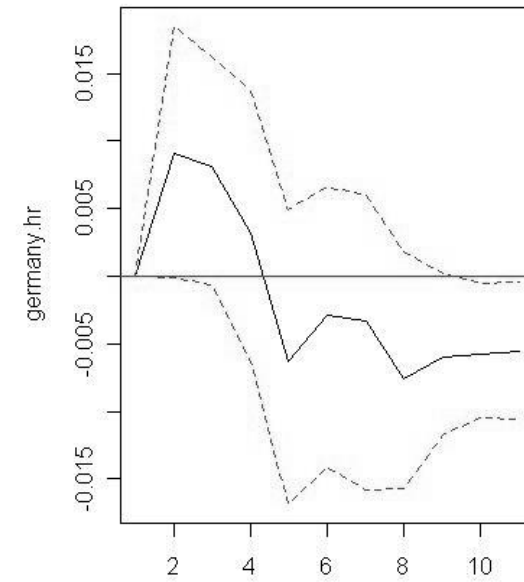
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.nyt



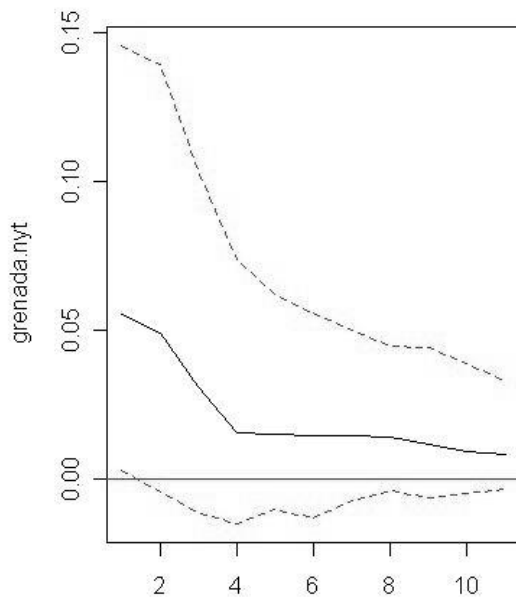
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.nyt



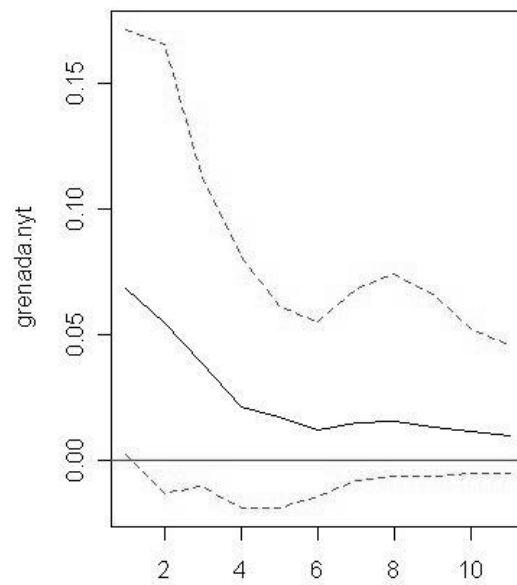
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from grenada.speech



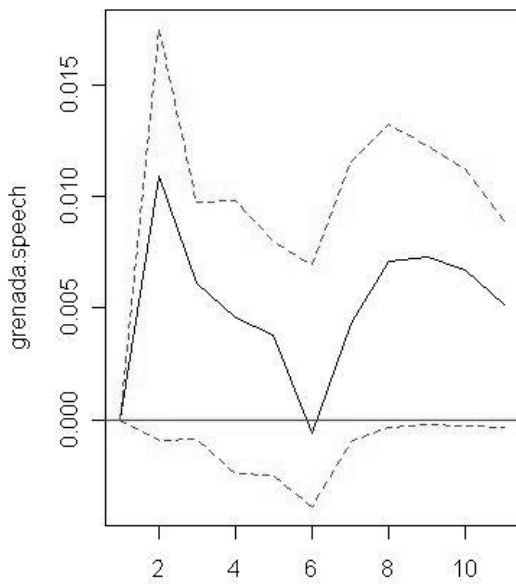
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from grenada.hr



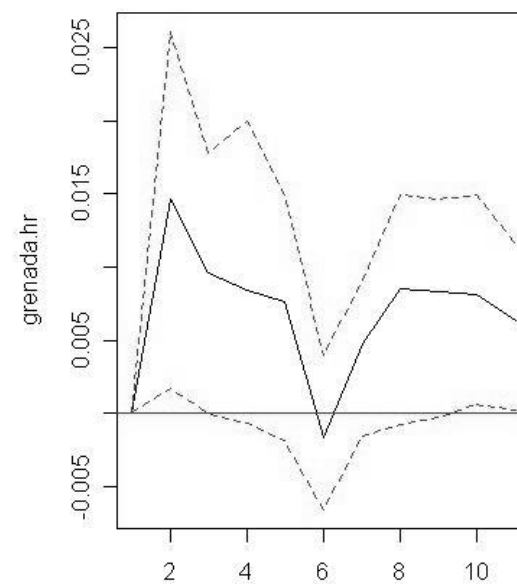
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from grenada.nyt



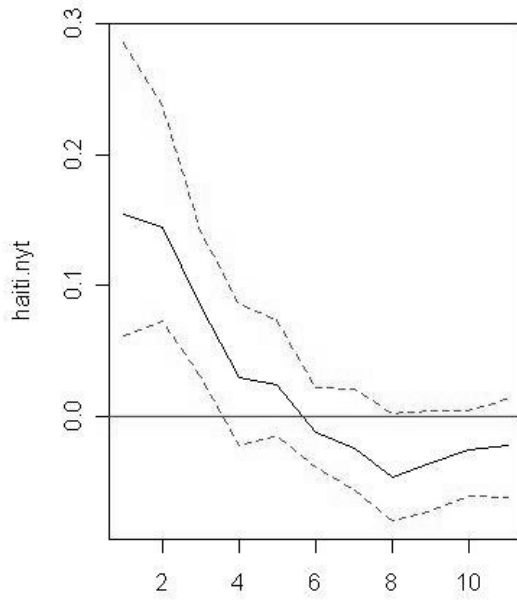
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from grenada.nyt



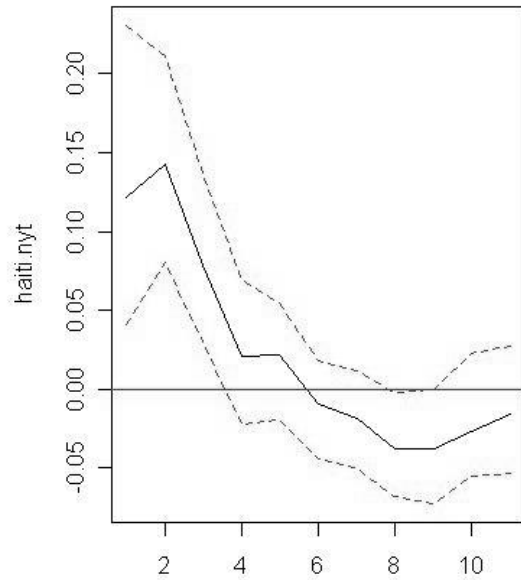
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.speech



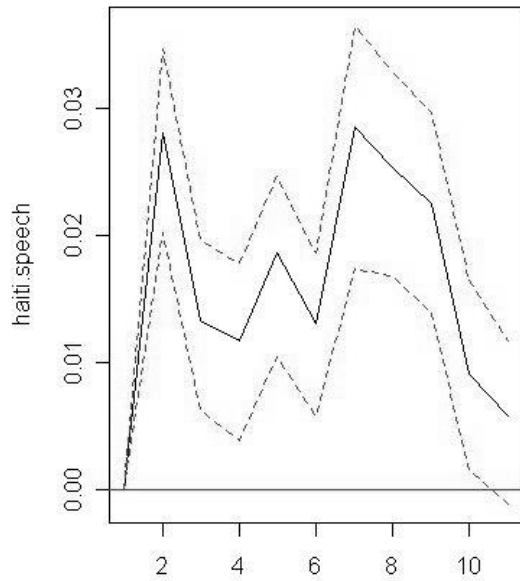
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.hr



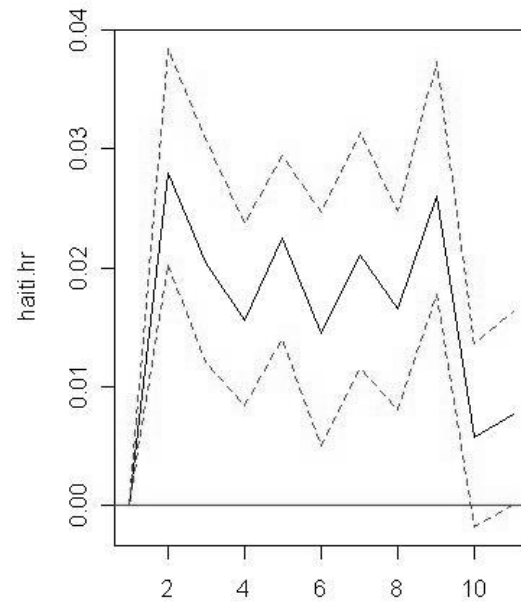
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

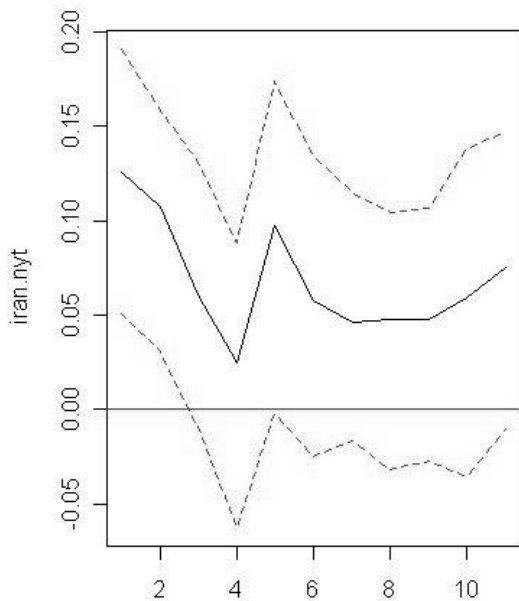
Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

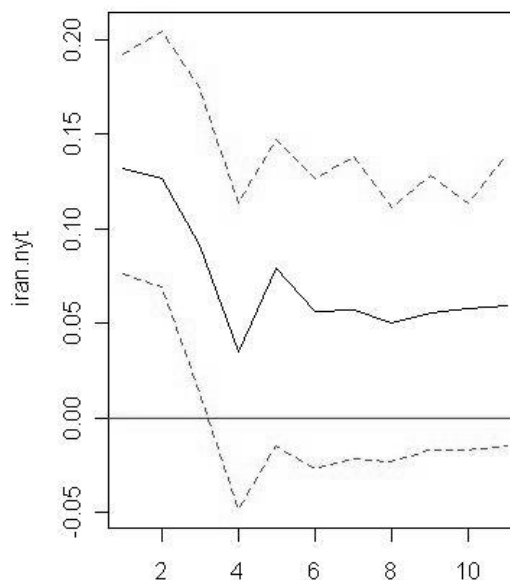


Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.speech



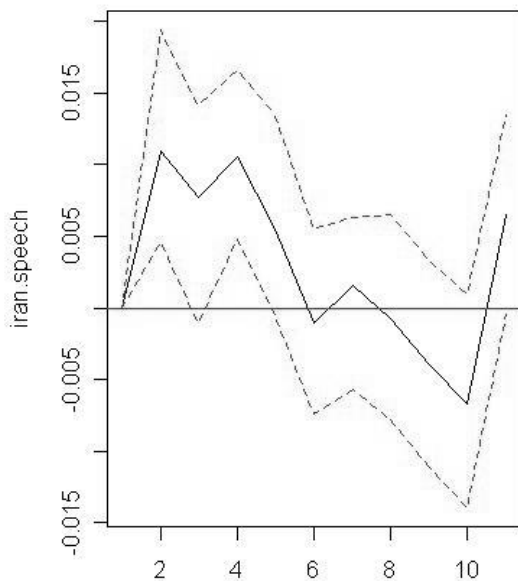
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.hr



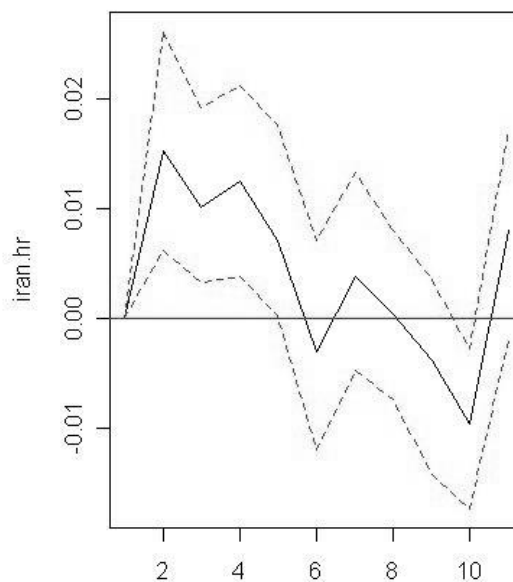
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.nyt



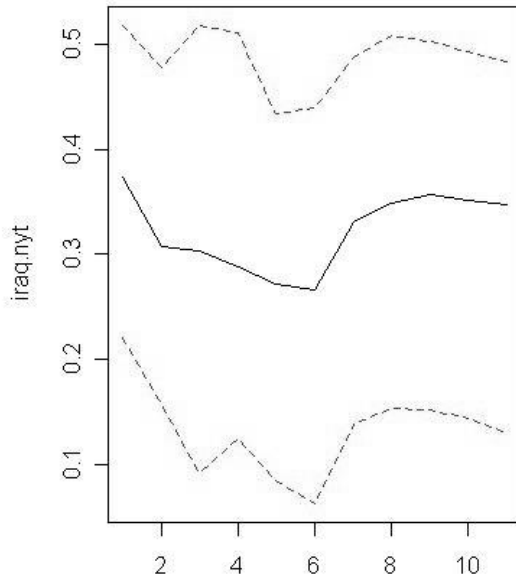
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.nyt



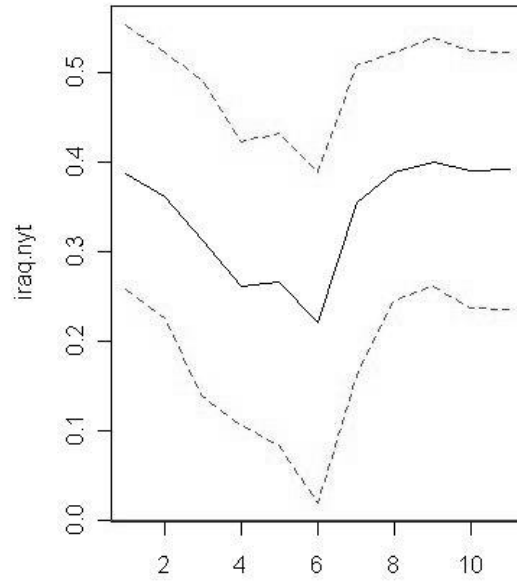
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.speech



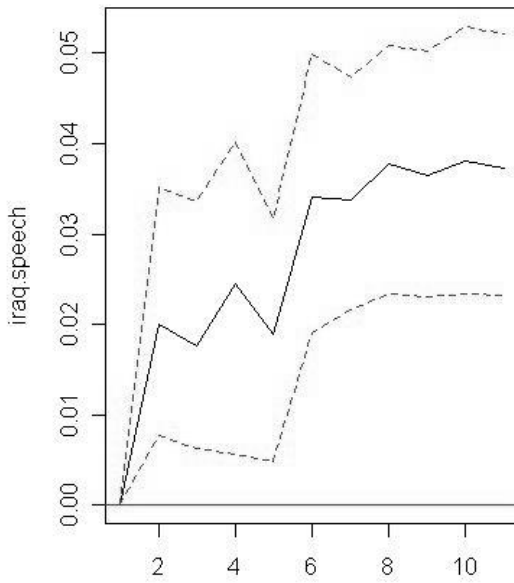
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.hr



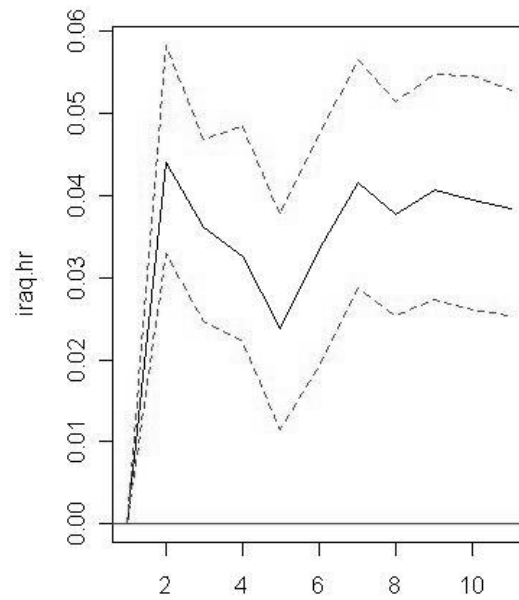
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.nyt



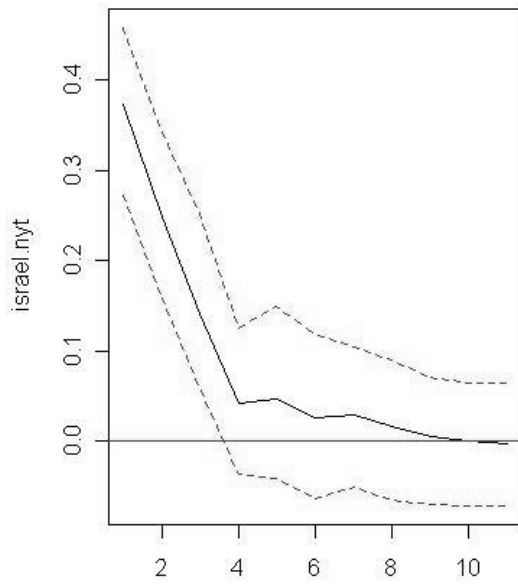
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.nyt



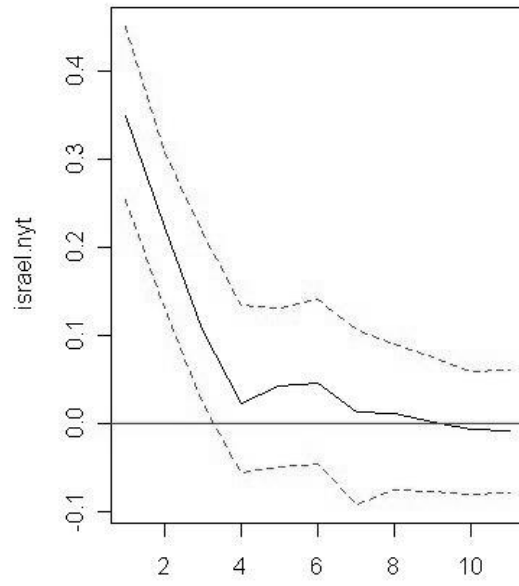
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.speech



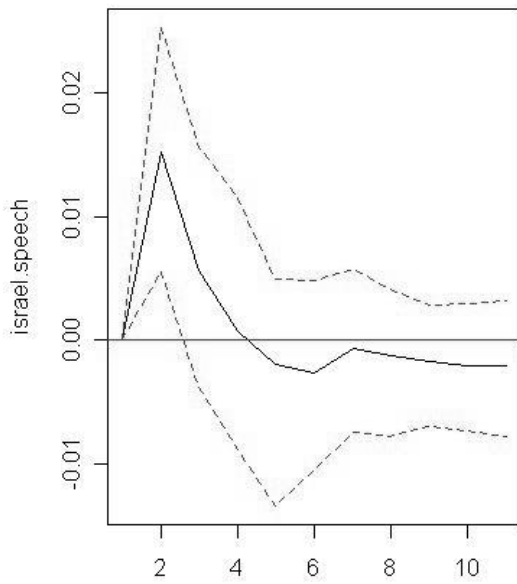
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.hr



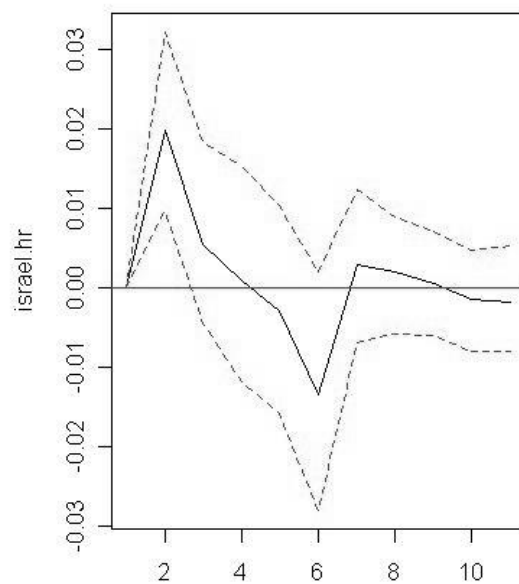
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.nyt



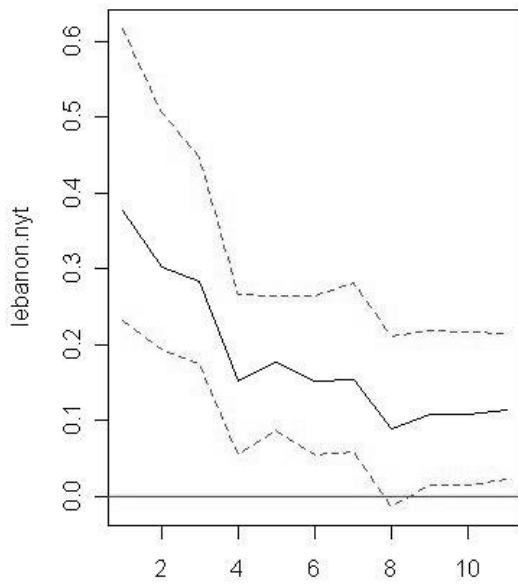
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.nyt



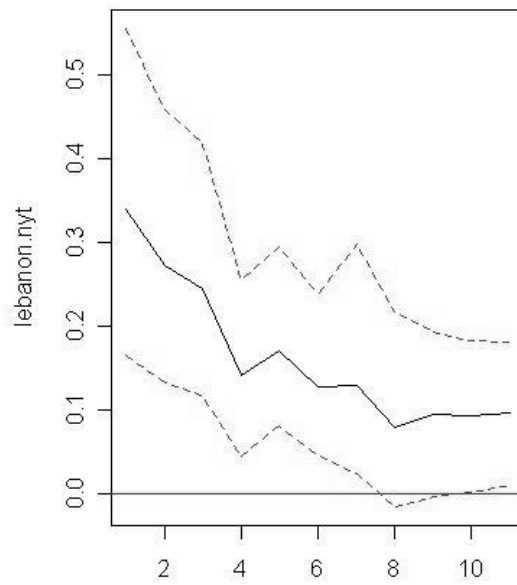
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.speech



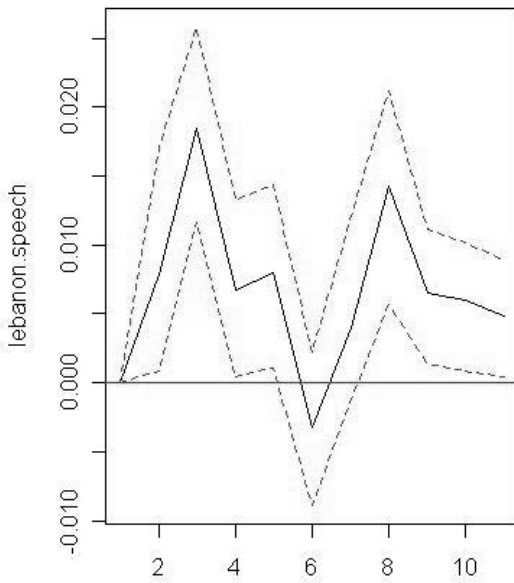
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.hr



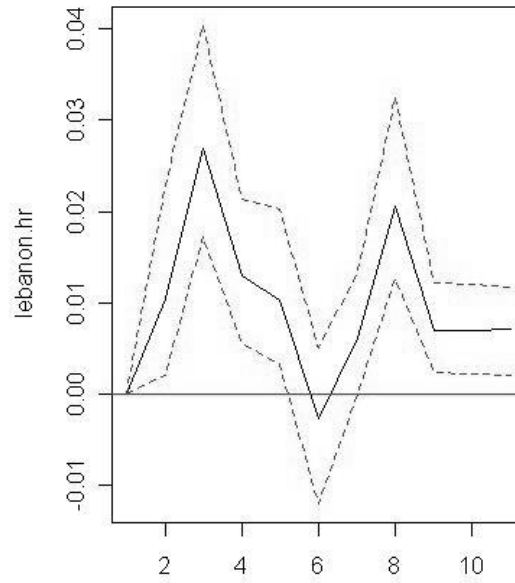
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.nyt



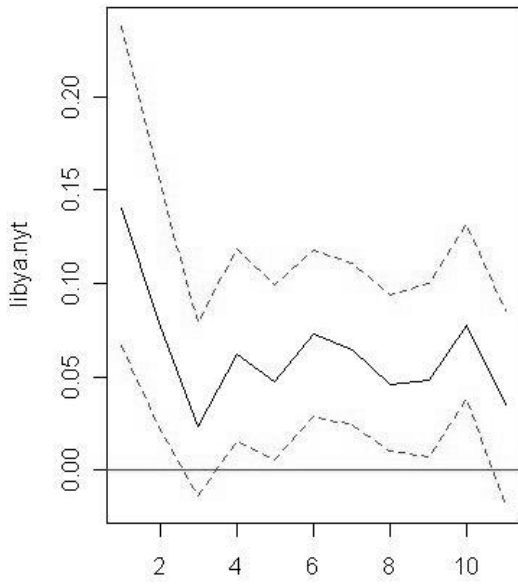
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.nyt



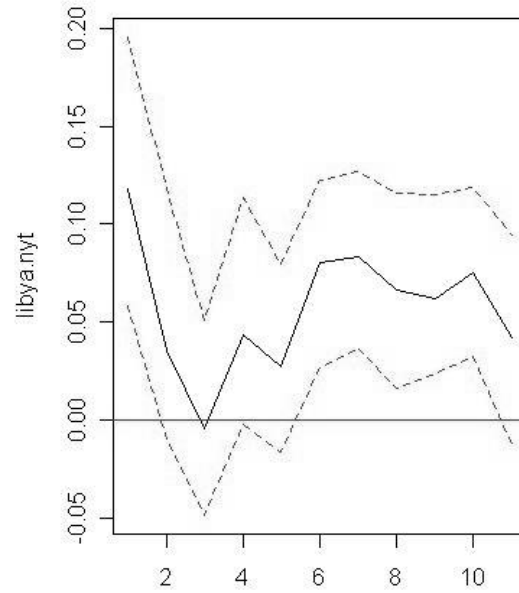
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.speech



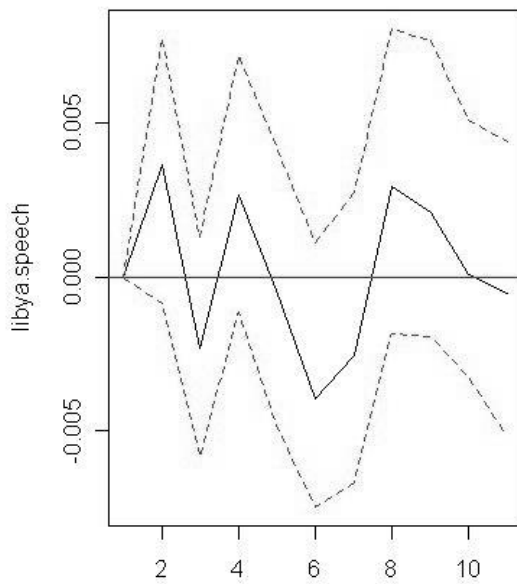
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.hr



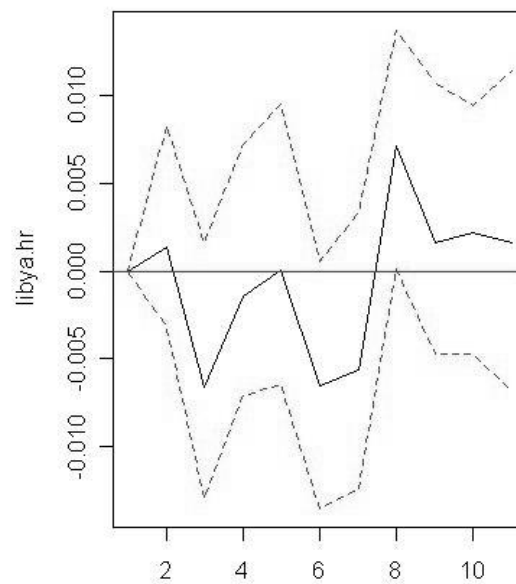
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.nyt



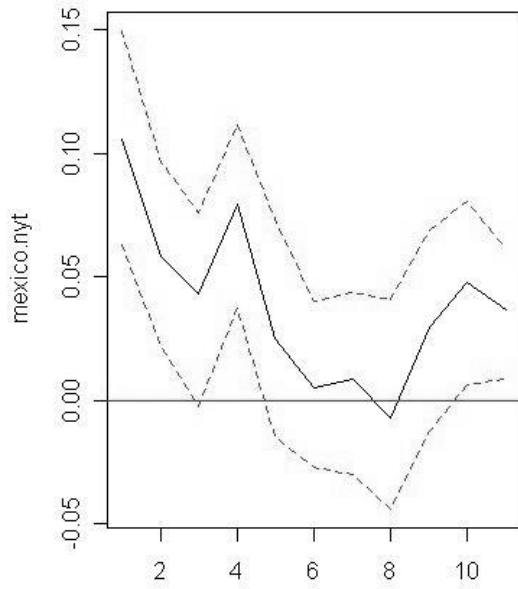
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.nyt



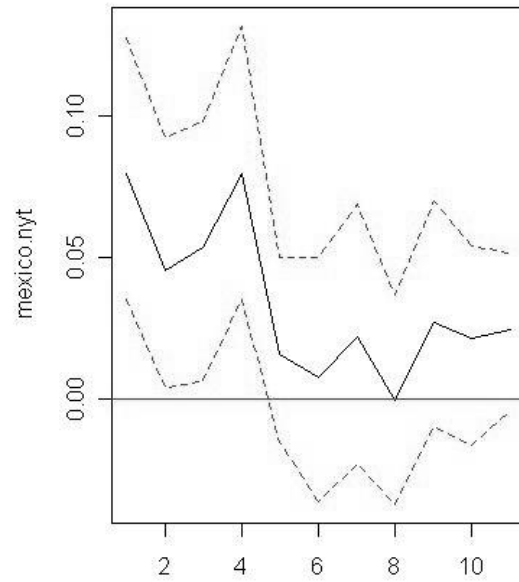
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.speech



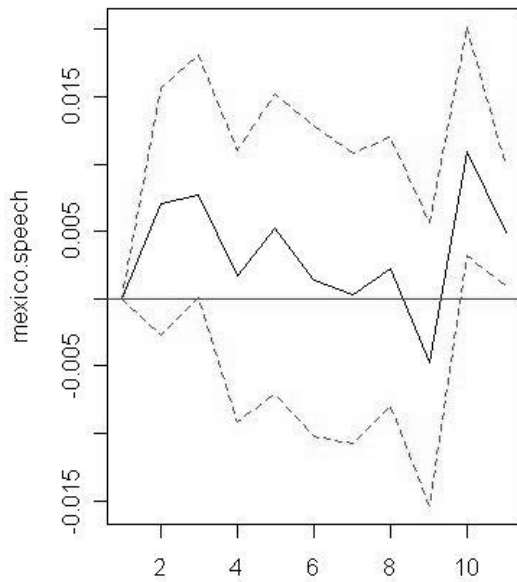
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.hr



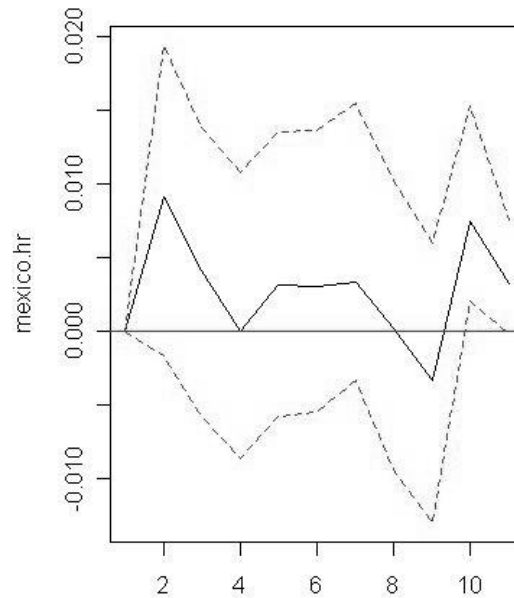
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

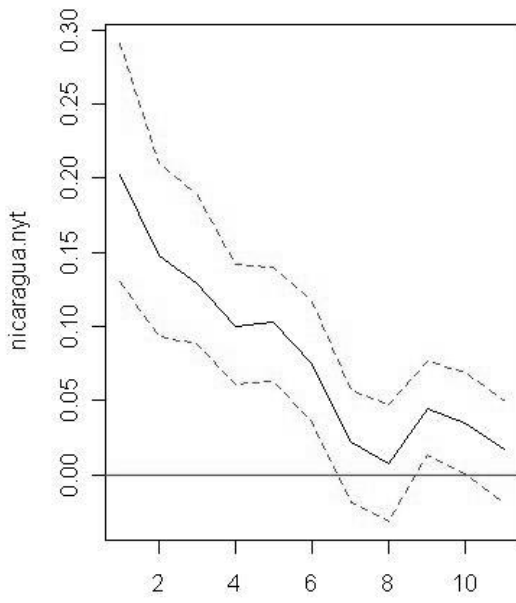
Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

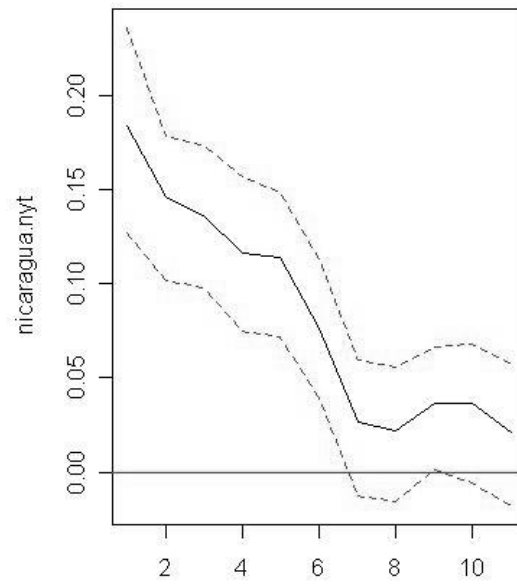


Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.speech



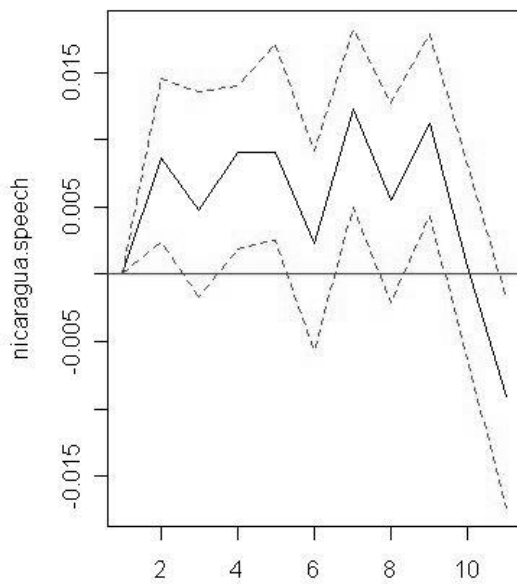
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.hr



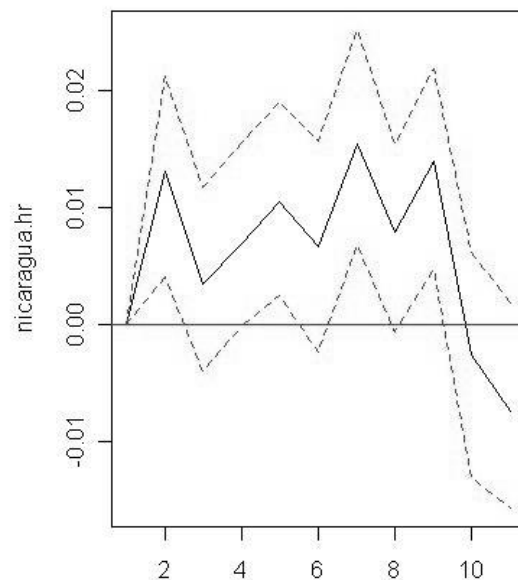
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.nyt



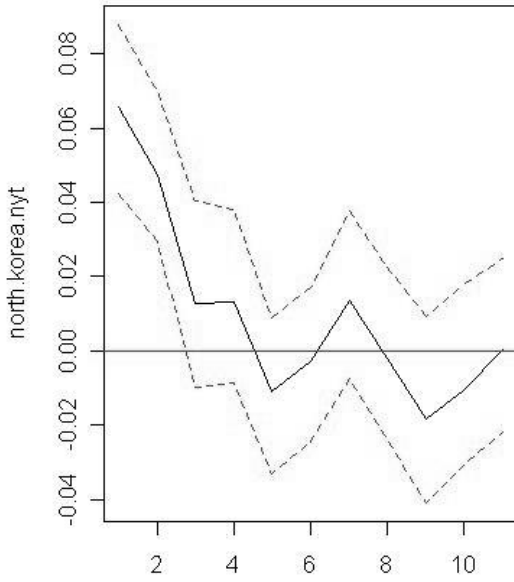
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.nyt



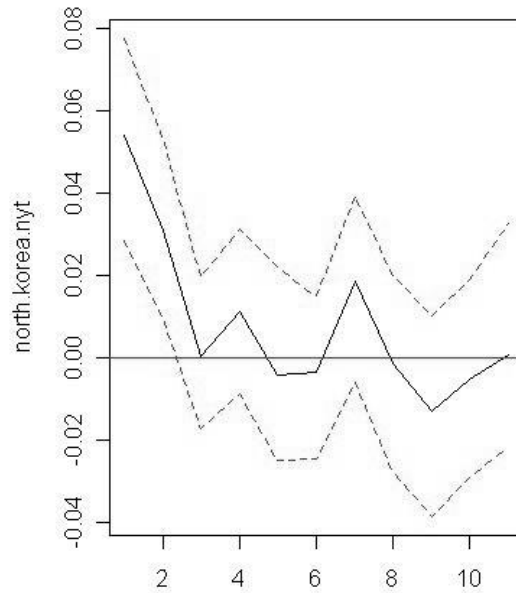
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.speech



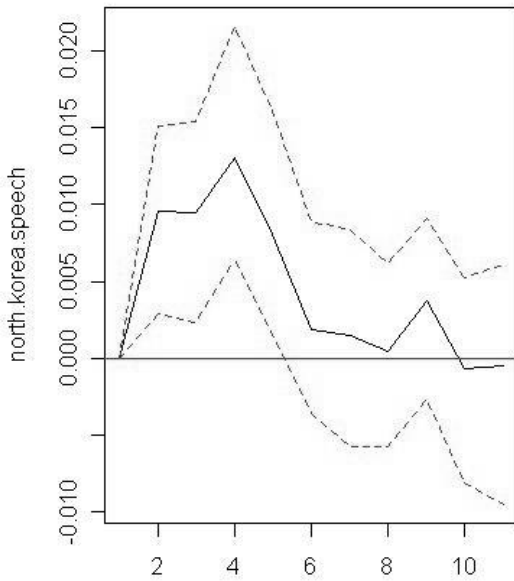
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.hr



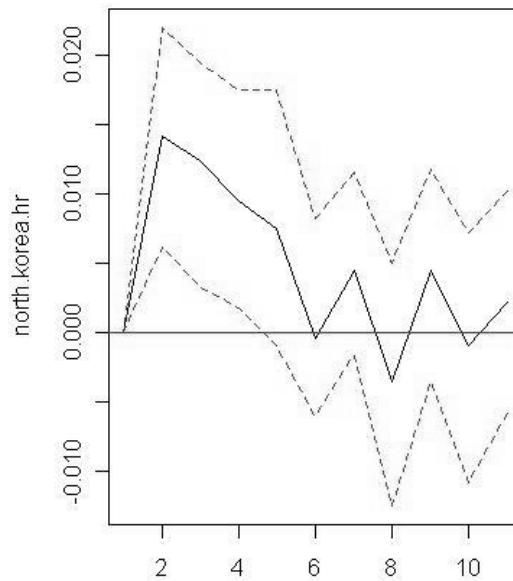
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.nyt



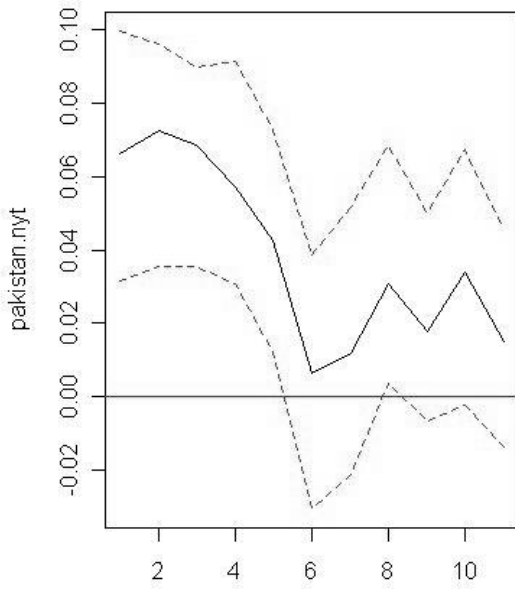
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.nyt



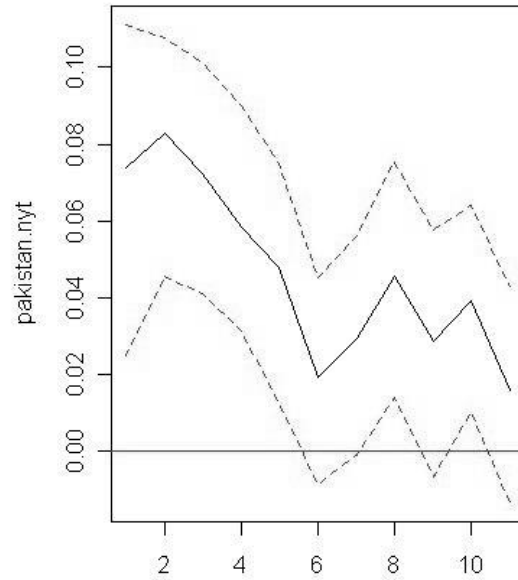
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.speech



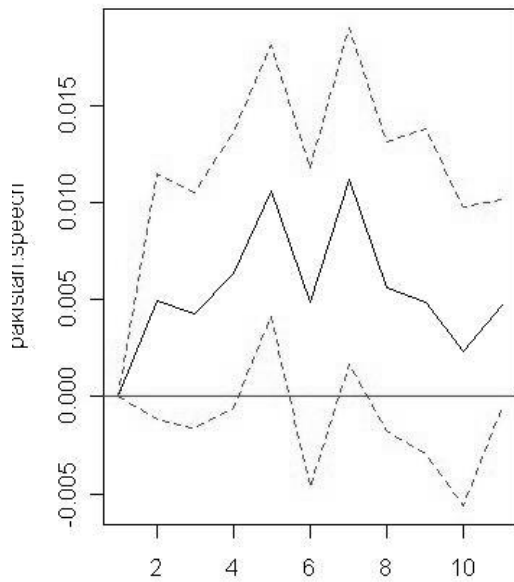
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.hr



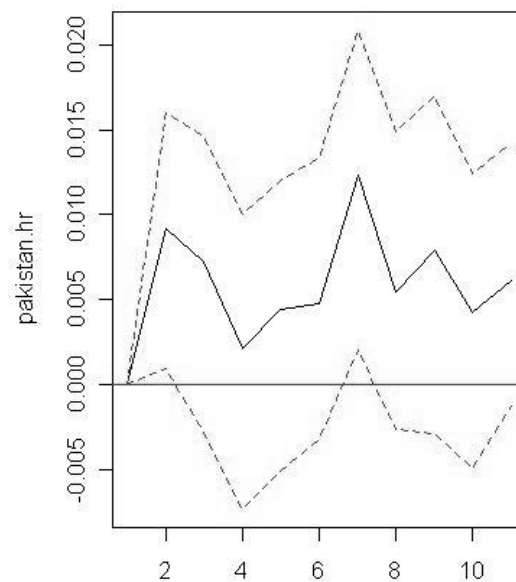
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.nyt



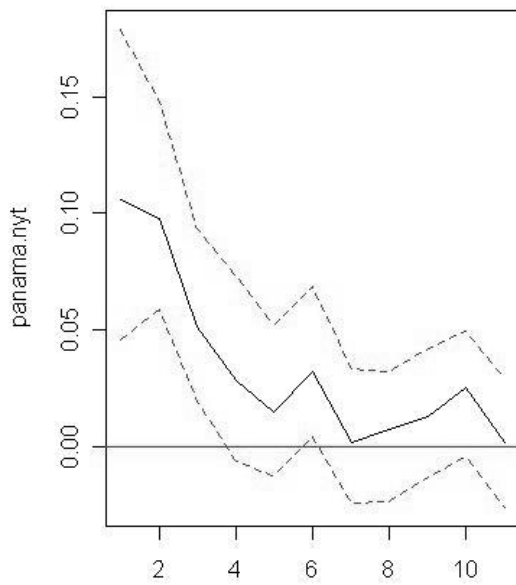
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.nyt



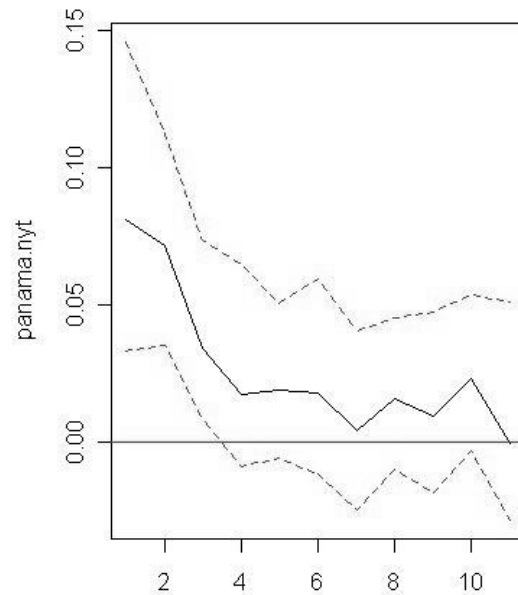
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.speech



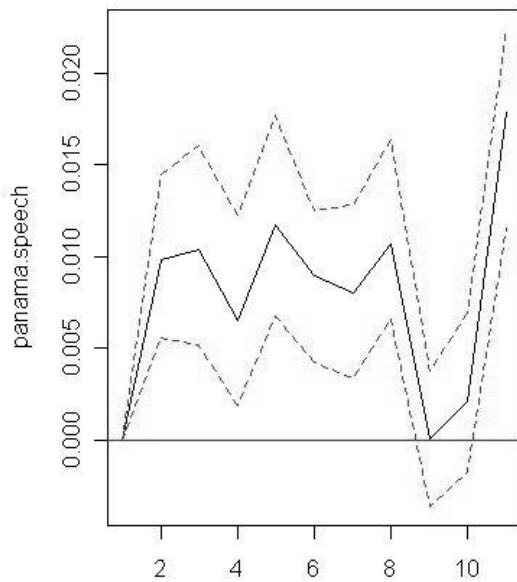
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.hr



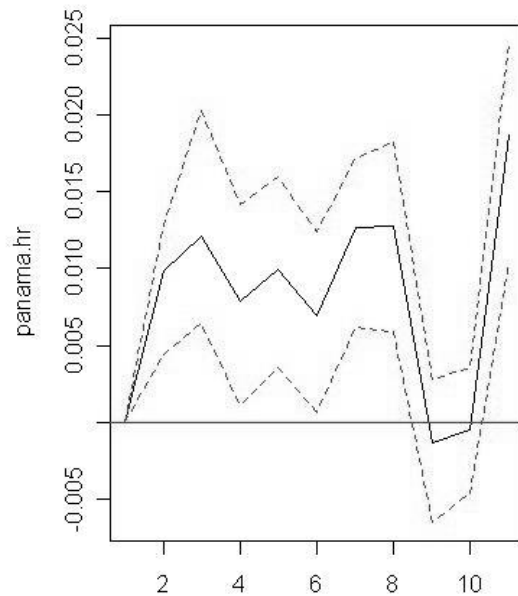
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.nyt



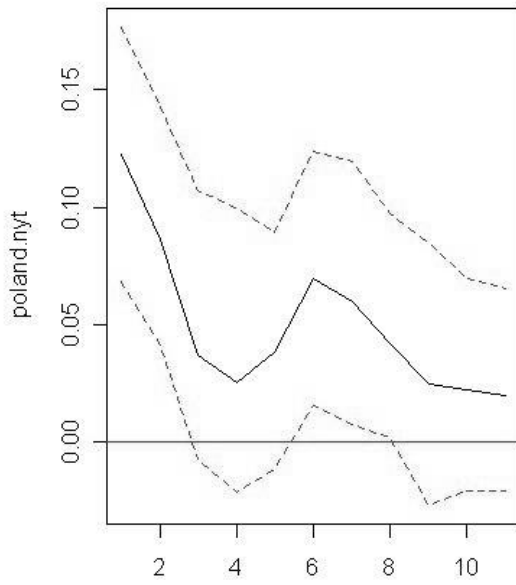
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.nyt



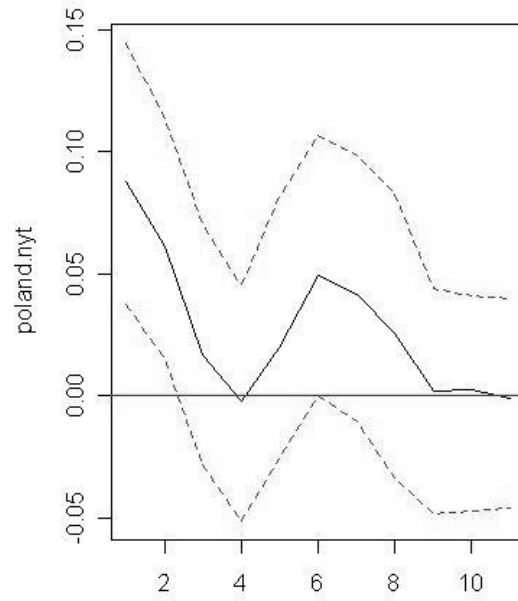
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.speech



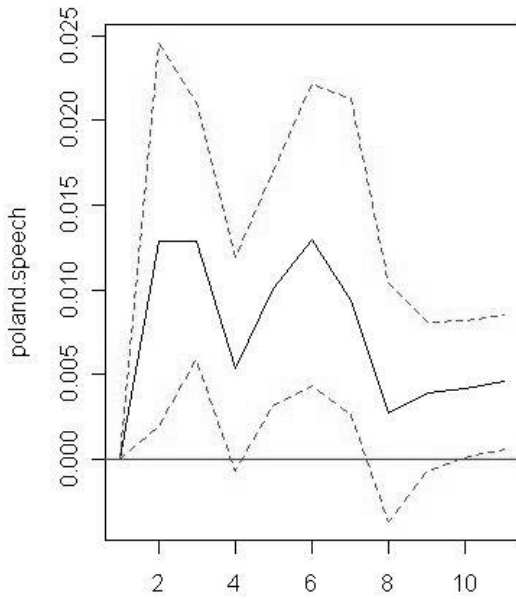
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.hr



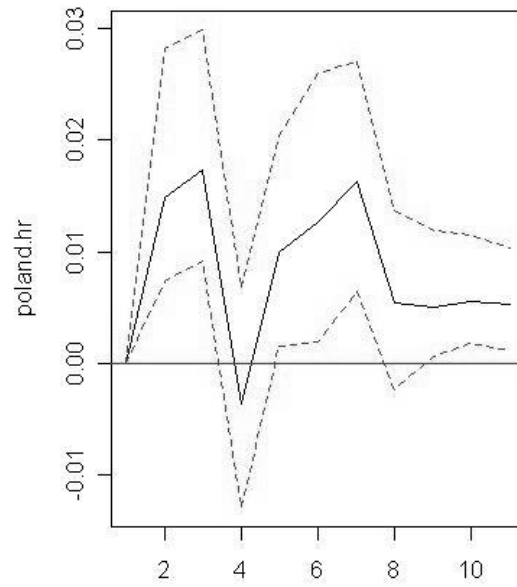
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.nyt



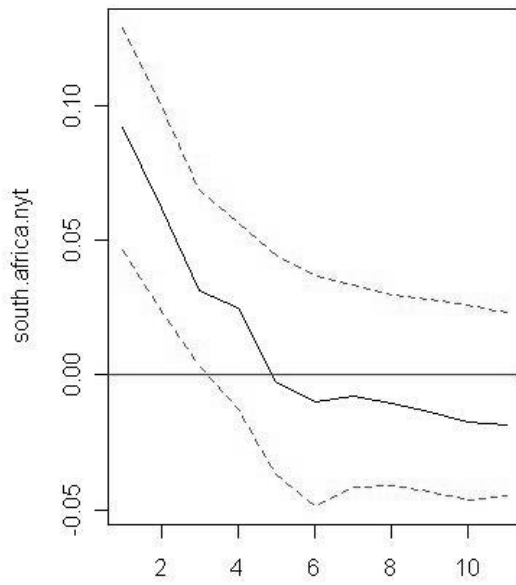
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.hr



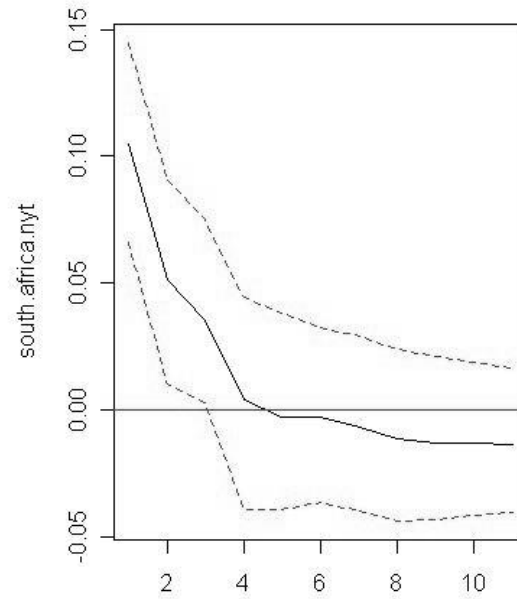
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.speech



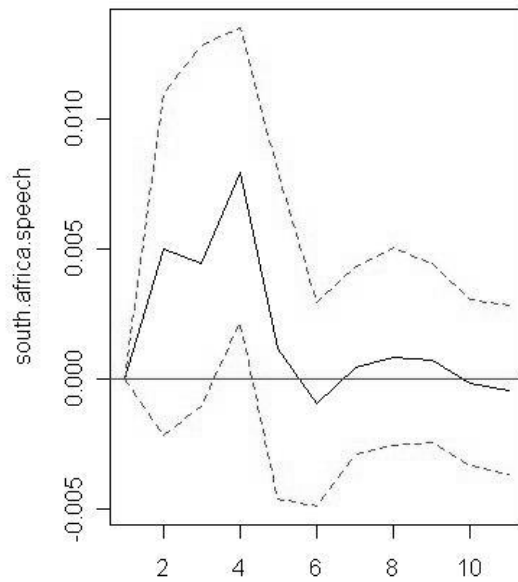
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.hr



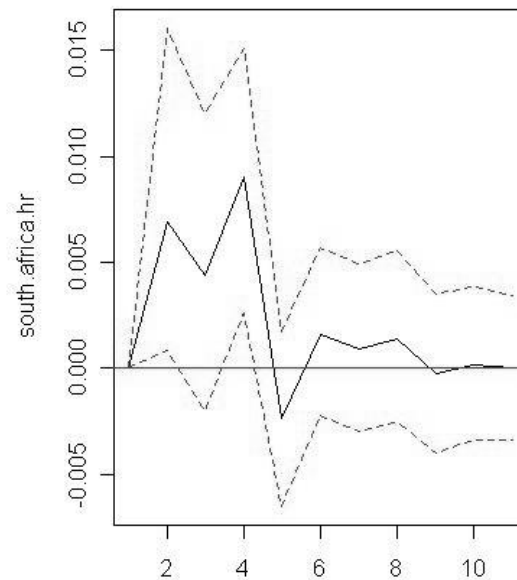
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

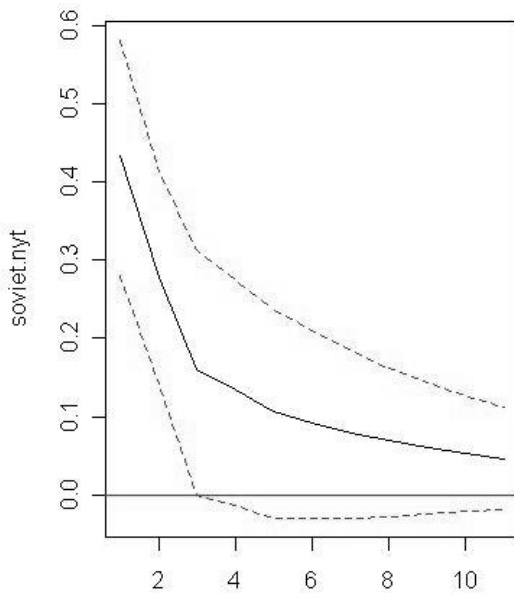
Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

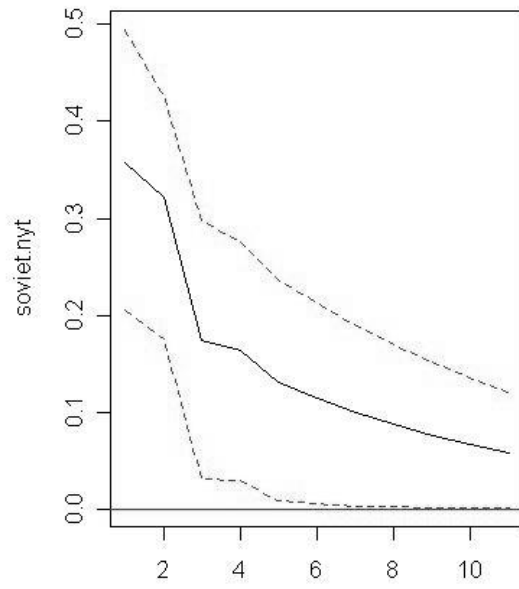


Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.speech



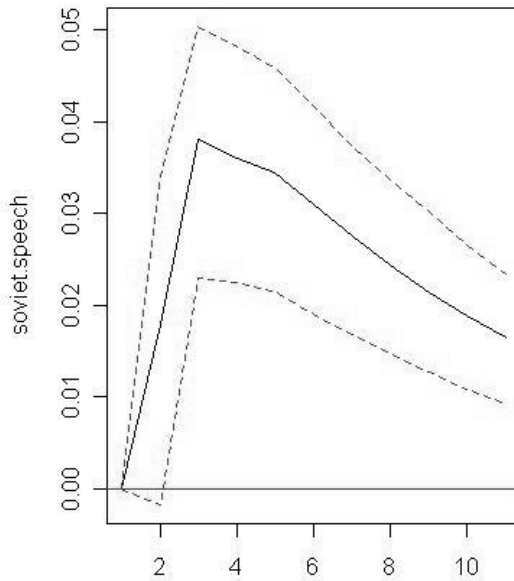
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.hr



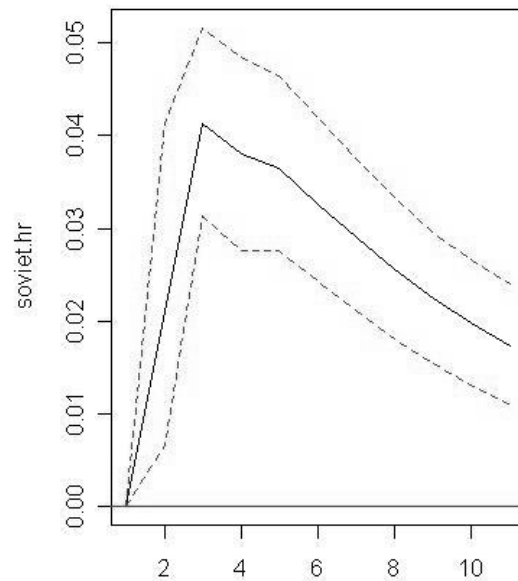
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.nytt



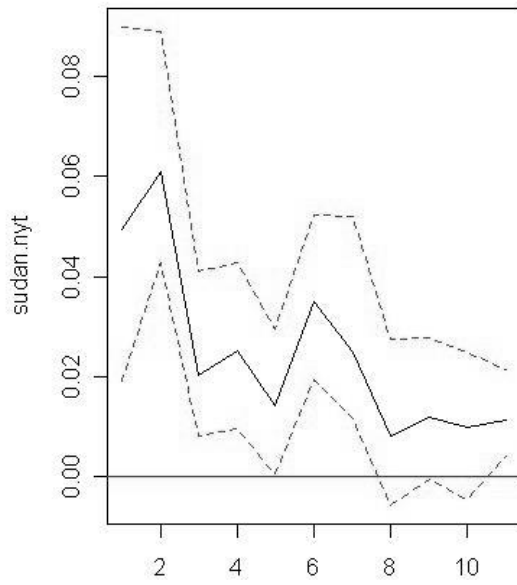
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.nytt



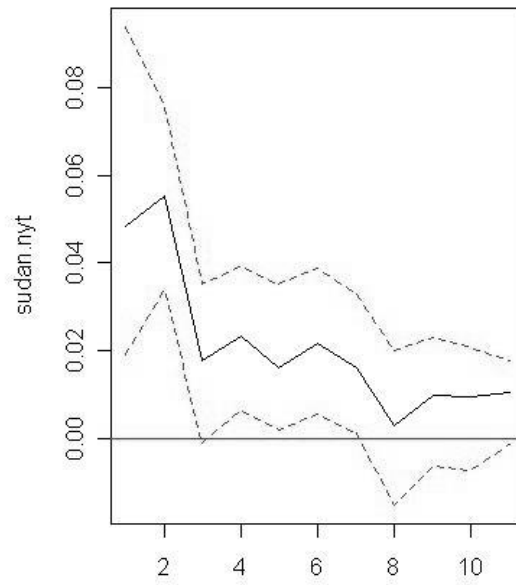
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.speech



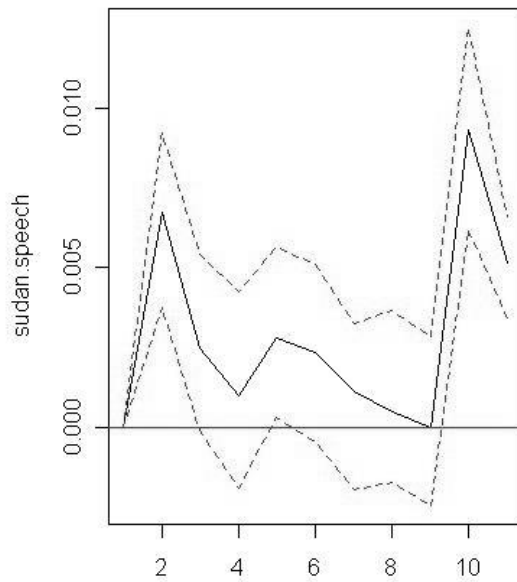
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.hr



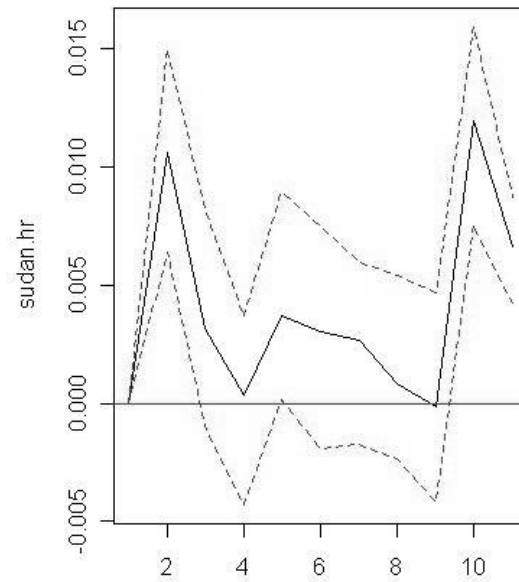
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.nyt



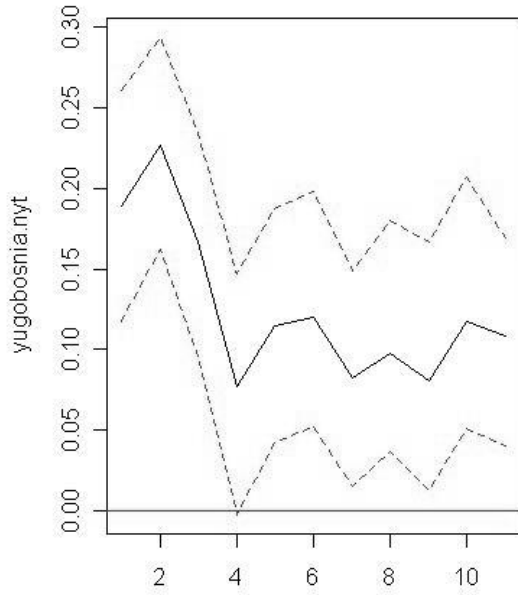
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.nyt



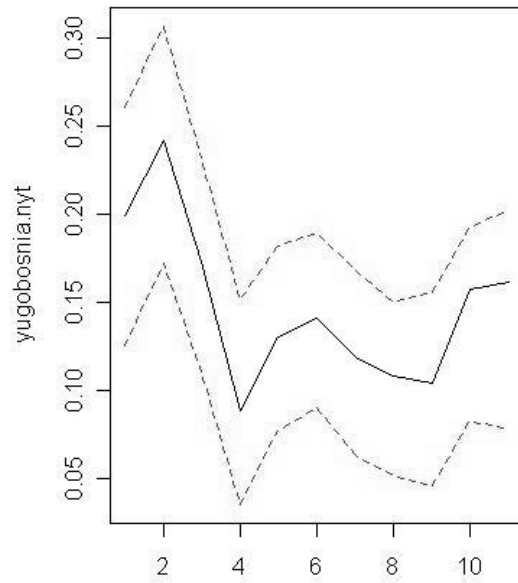
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.speech



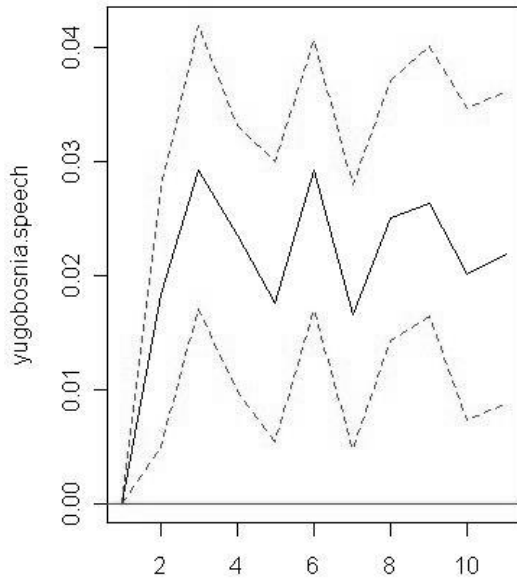
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.hr



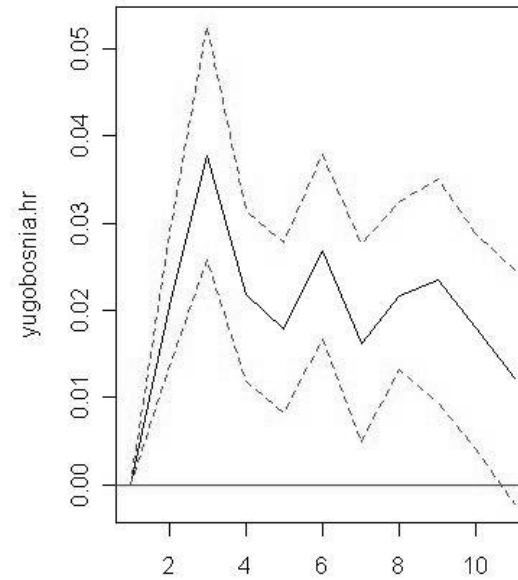
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.nyf



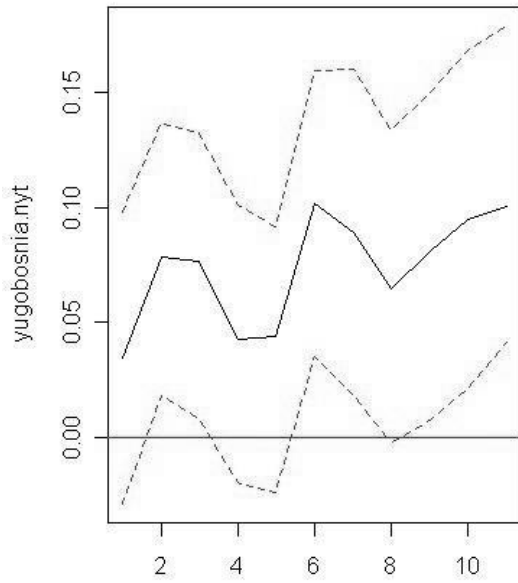
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.nyf



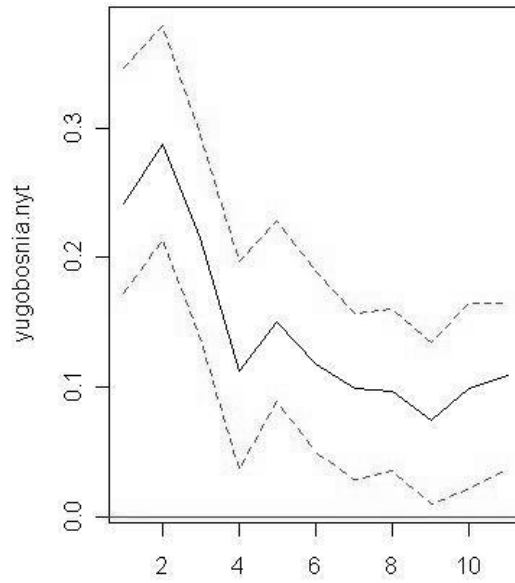
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.low



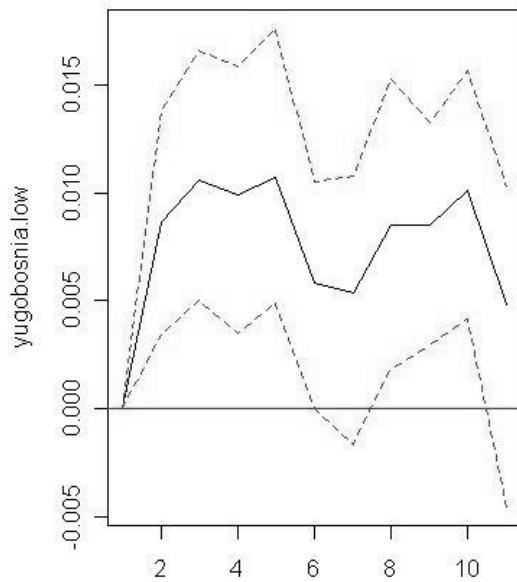
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.high



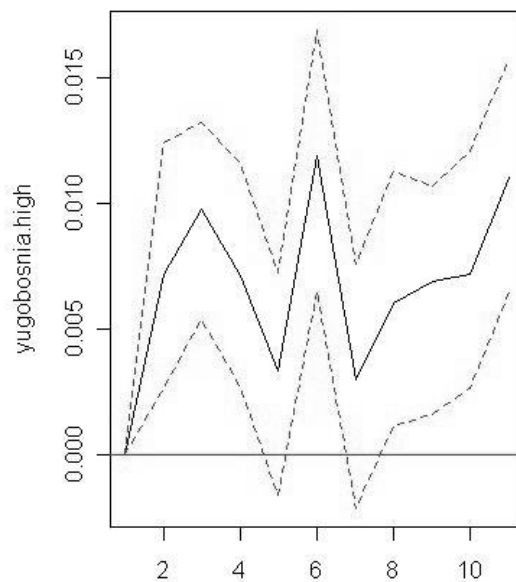
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.nyt



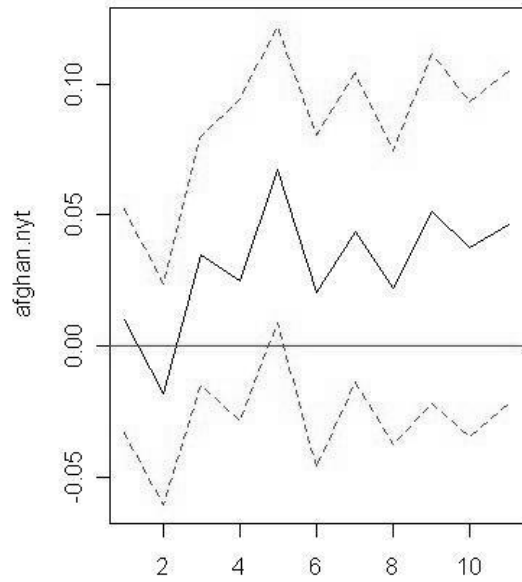
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.nyt



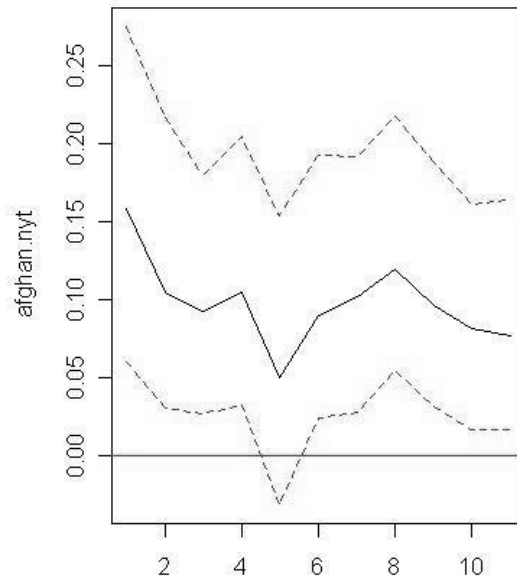
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.under.high



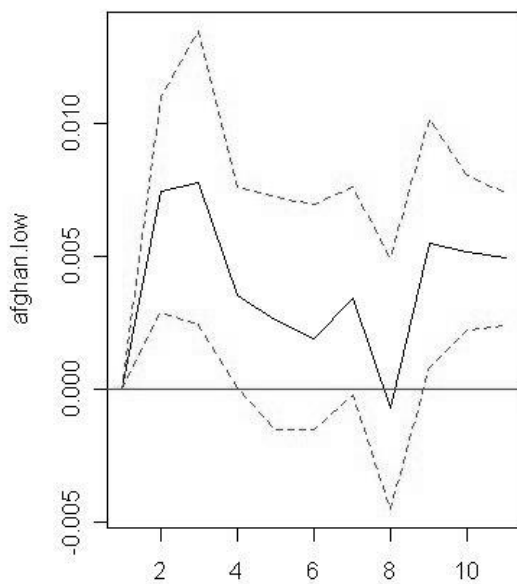
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.high



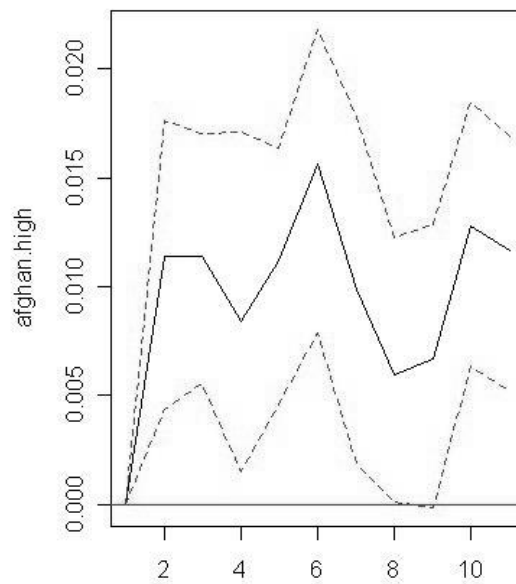
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.nyt



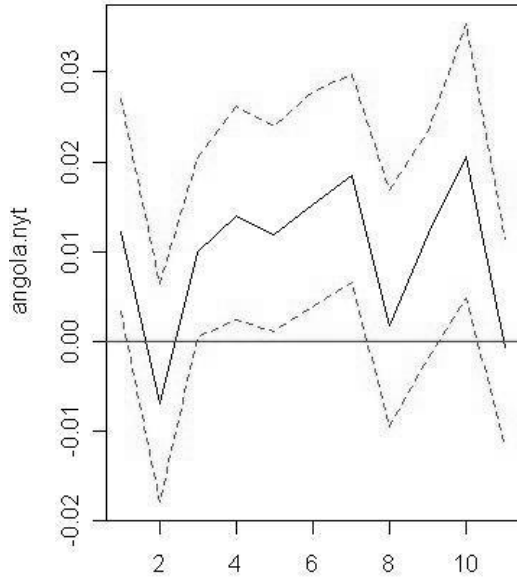
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.nyt



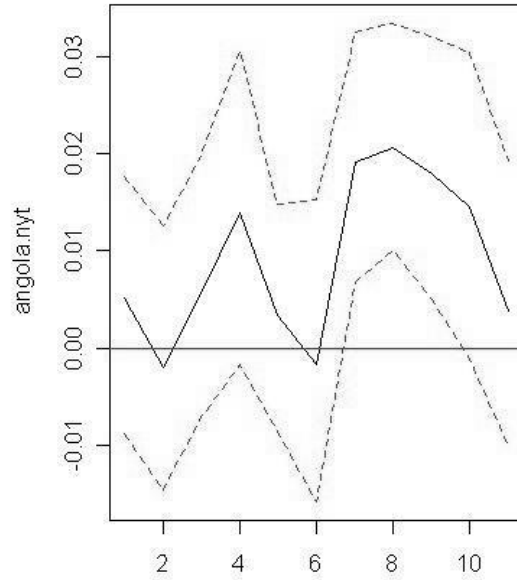
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from angola.under.high



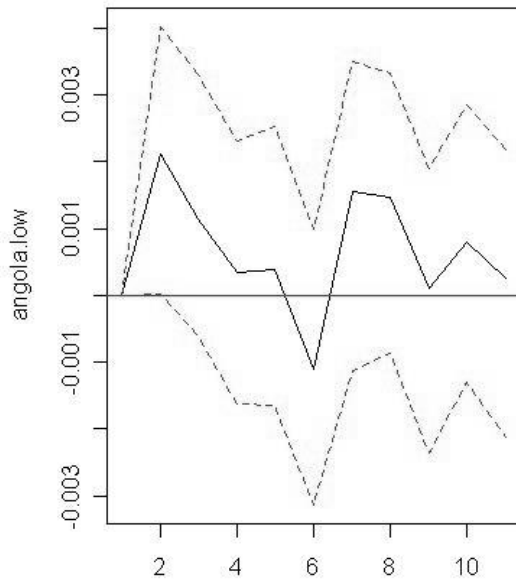
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from angola.high



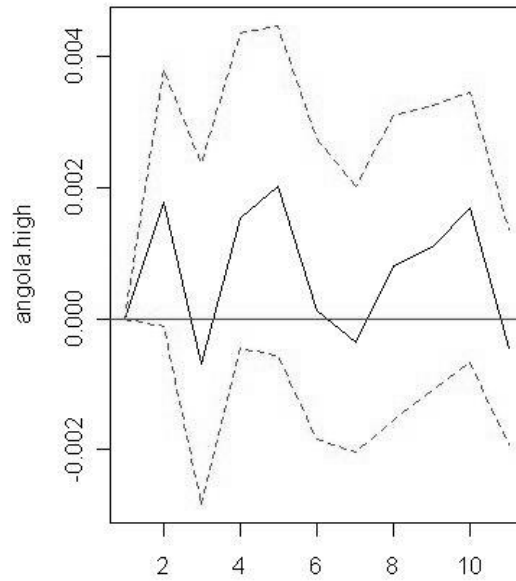
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from angola.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

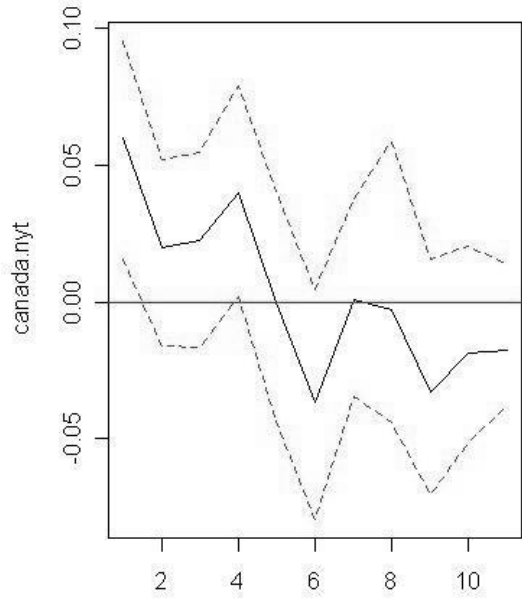
Orthogonal Impulse Response from angola.high



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

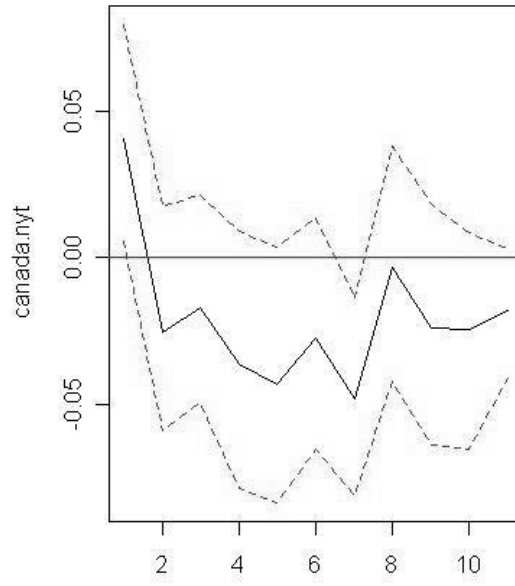


Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.under.high



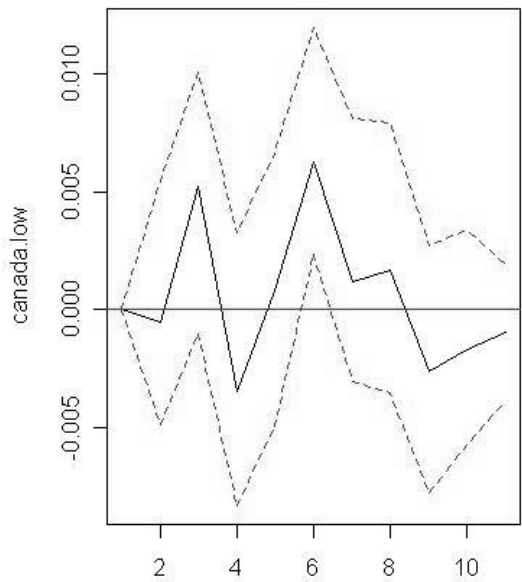
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.high



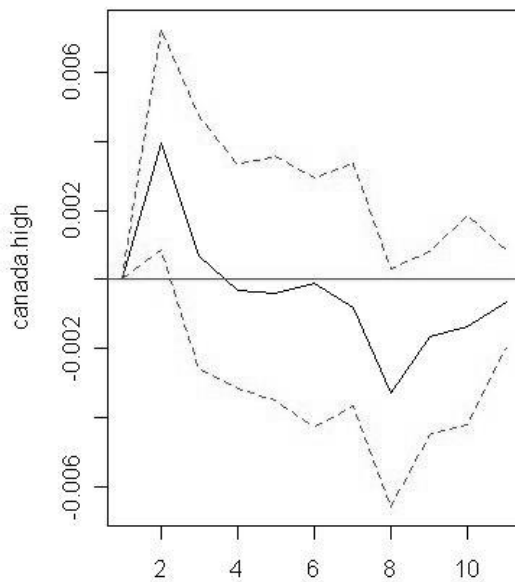
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.nyt



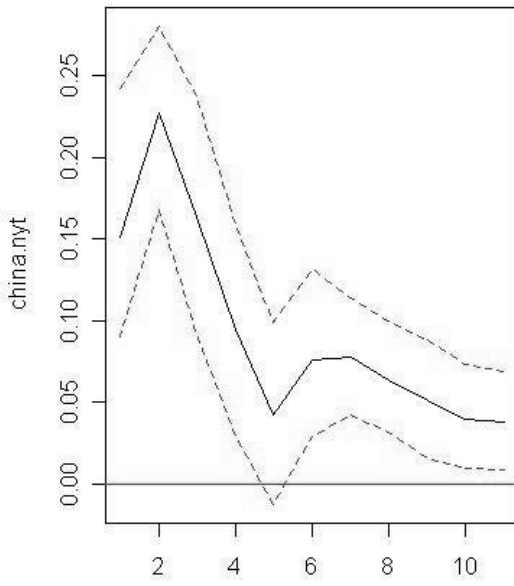
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.nyt



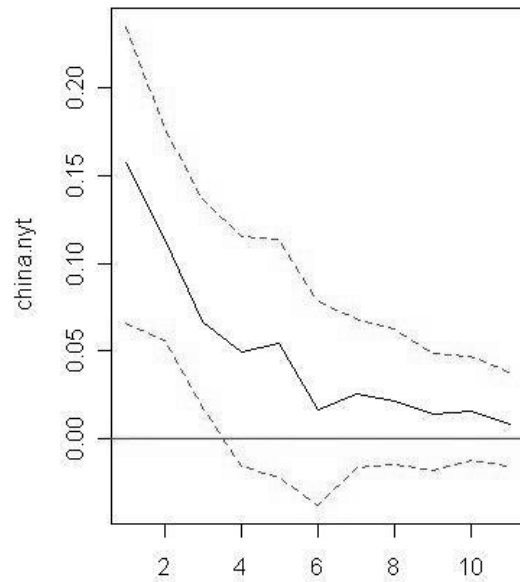
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.under.high



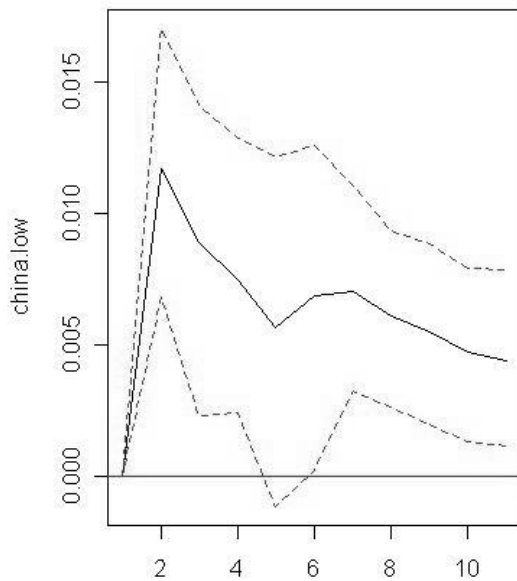
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.high



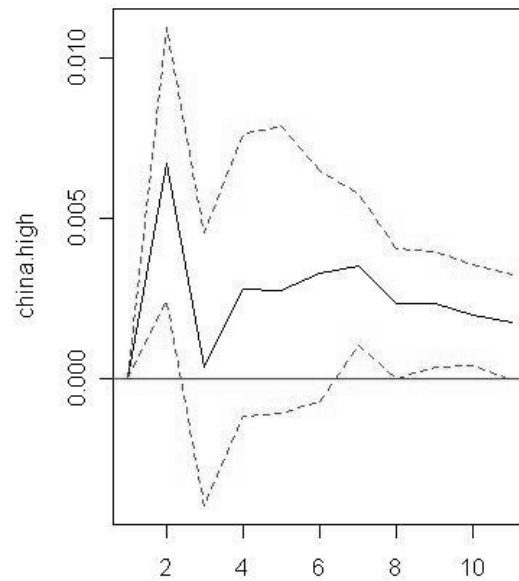
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.nyt



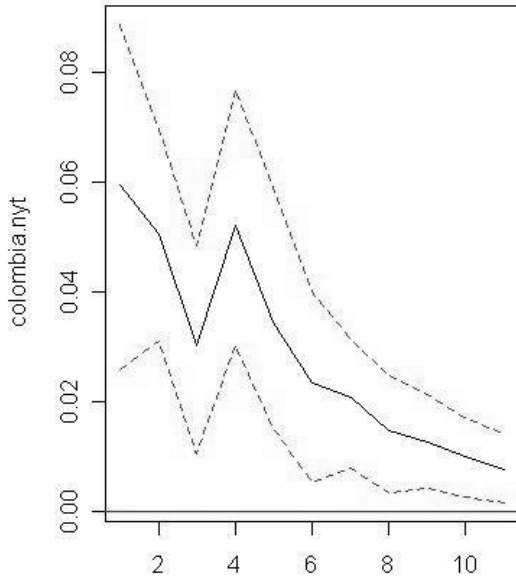
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.nyt



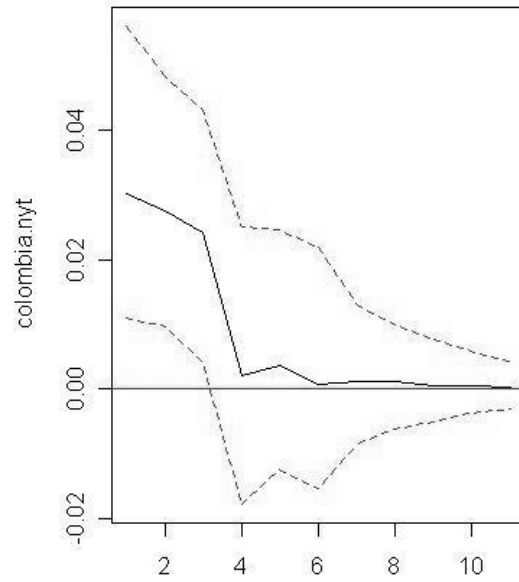
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.under.high



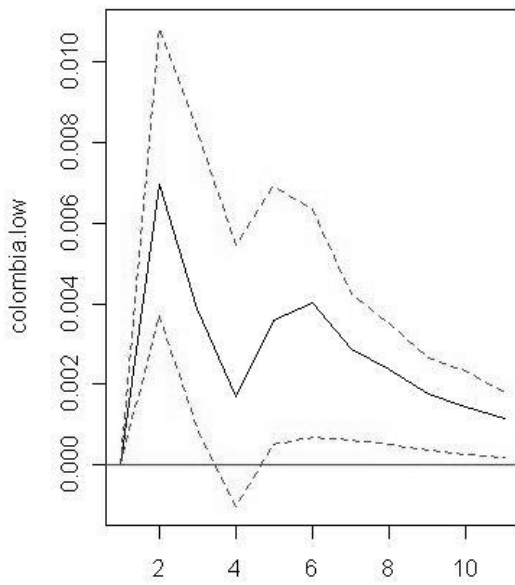
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.high



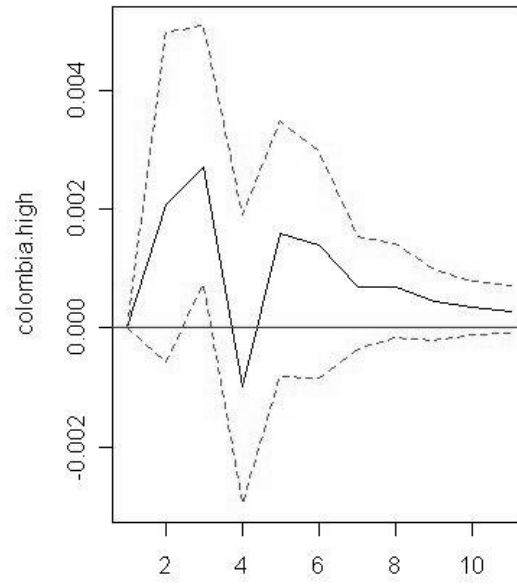
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.nyt



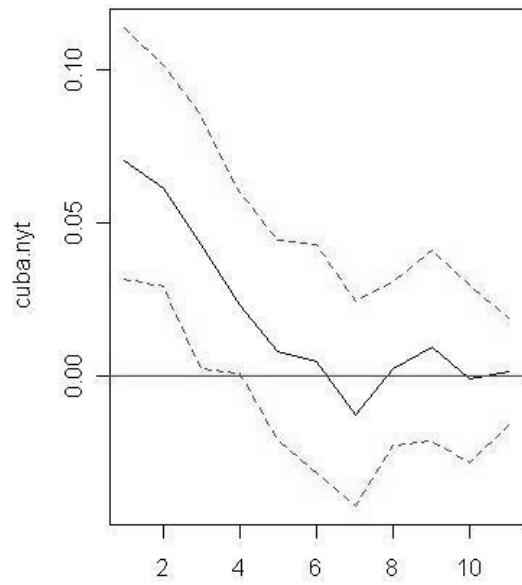
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.nyt



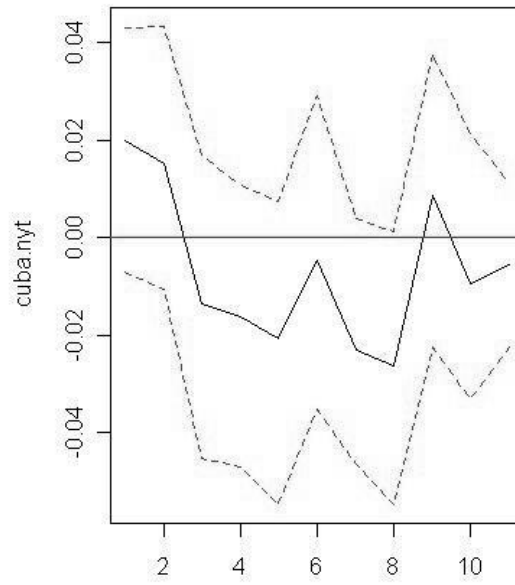
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.under.high



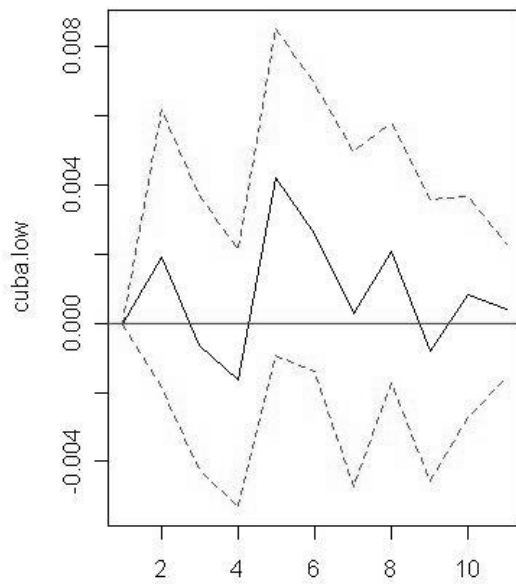
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.high



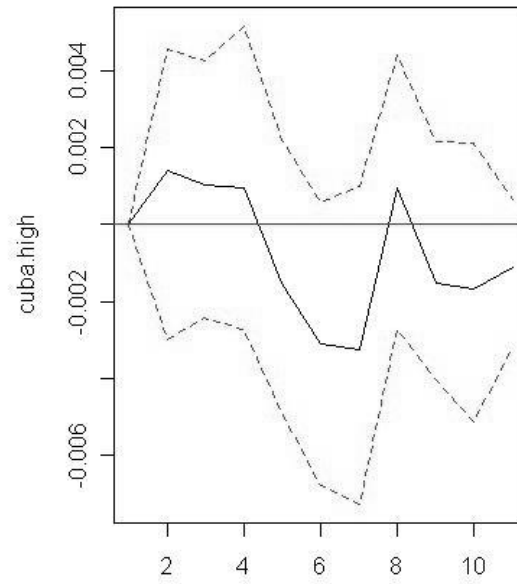
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.nyf



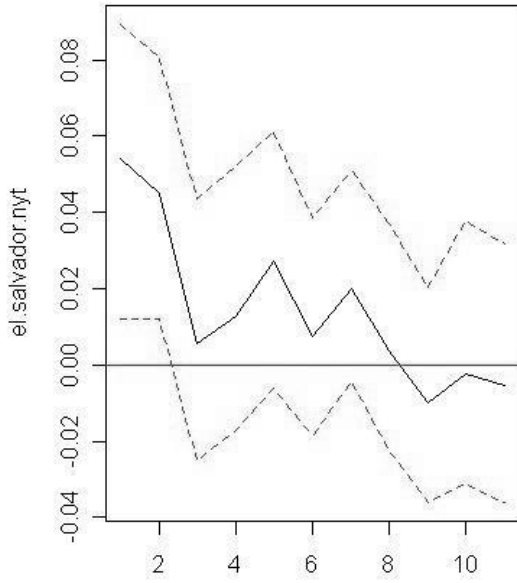
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.nyf



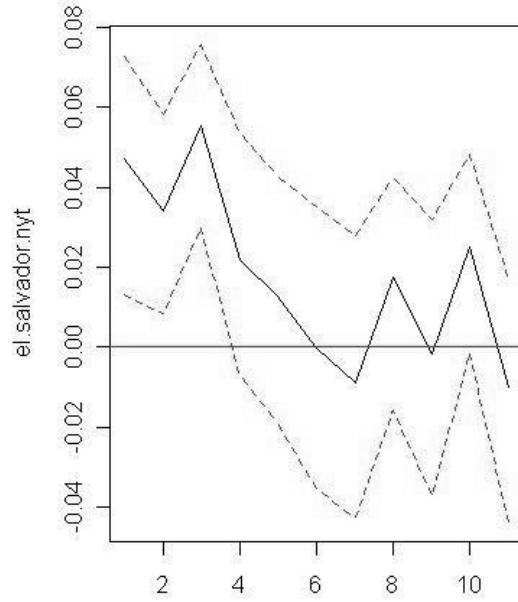
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.under.high



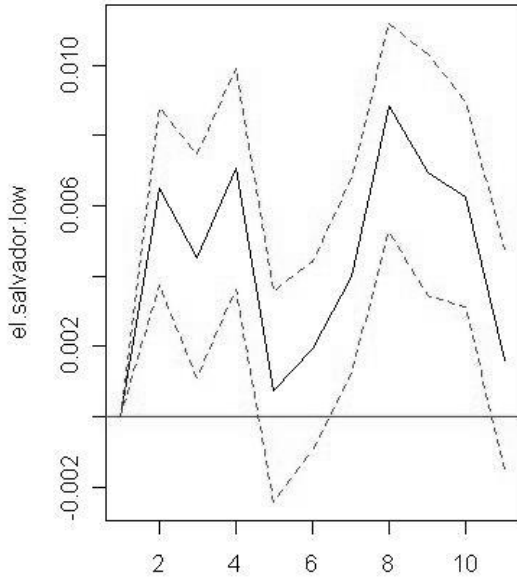
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.high



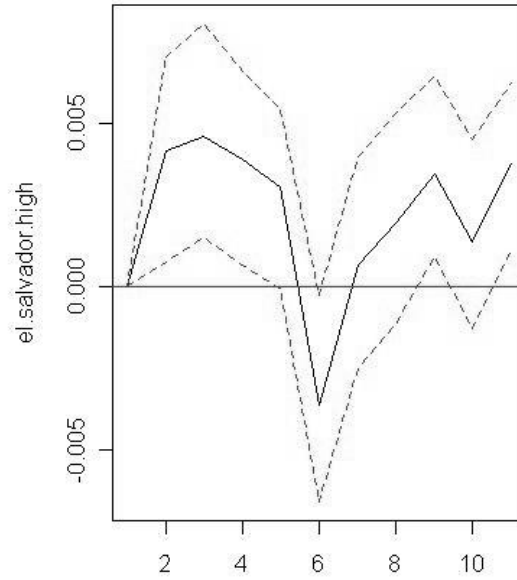
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.nyf



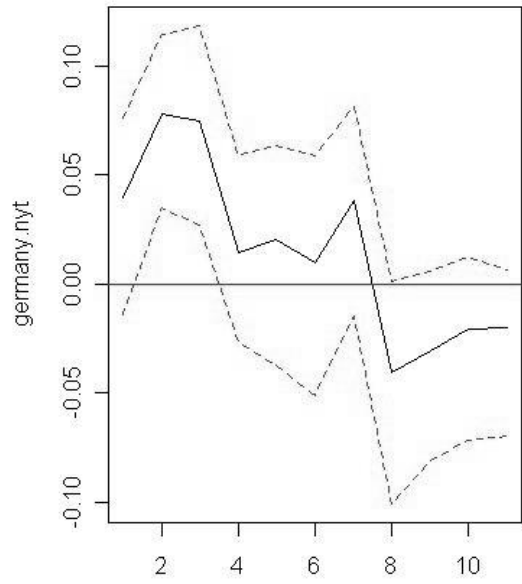
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.nyf



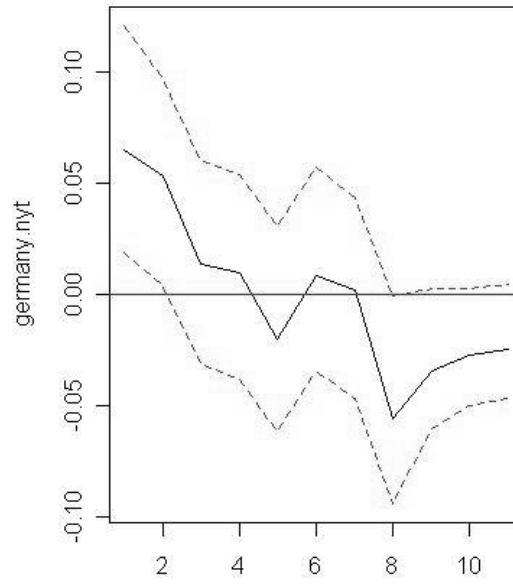
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.low



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

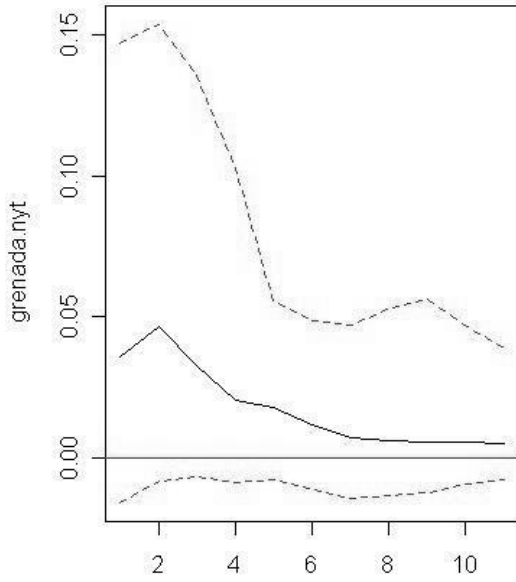
Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.high



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

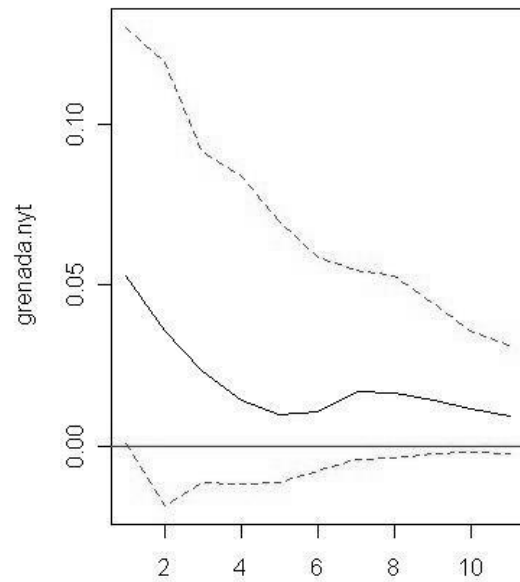


Orthogonal Impulse Response from grenada.low



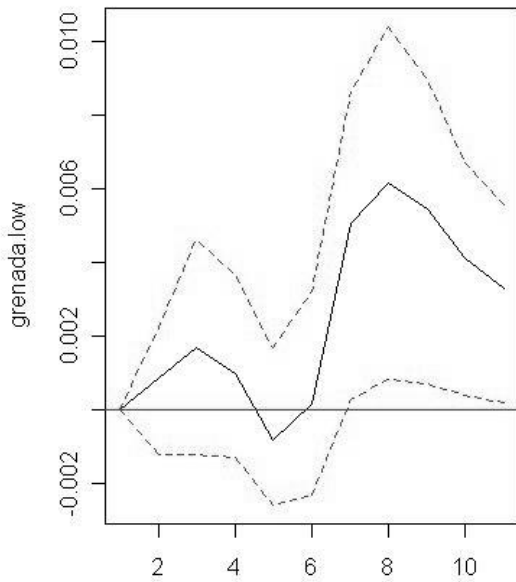
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from grenada.high



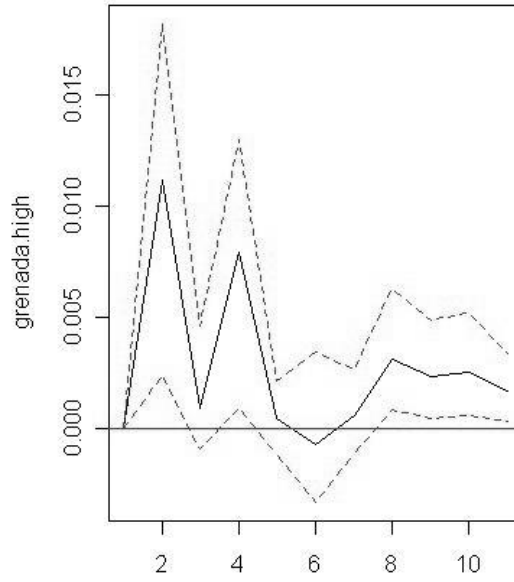
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from grenada.nyf



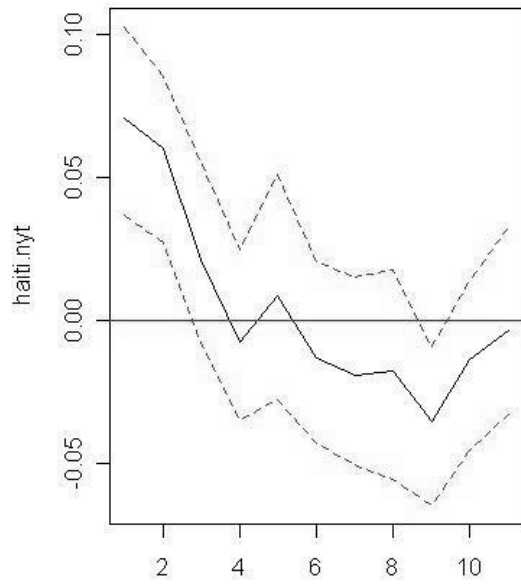
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from grenada.nyf



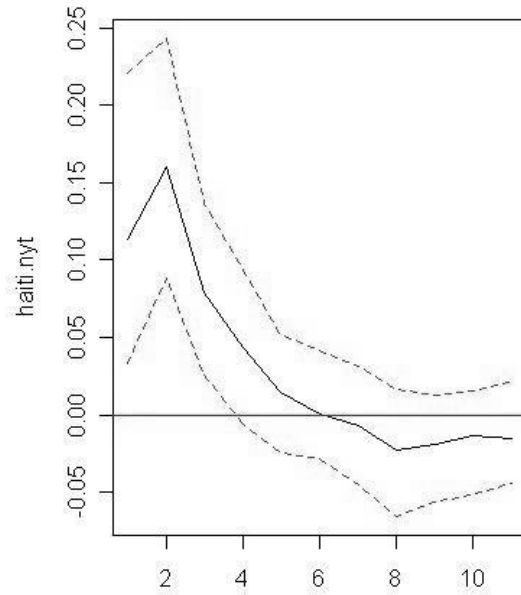
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.low



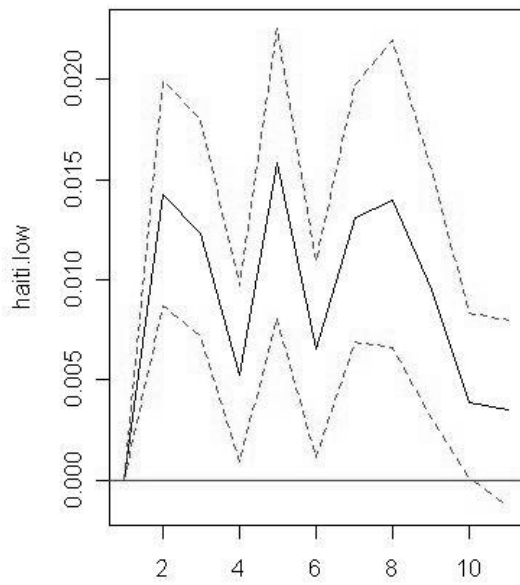
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.high



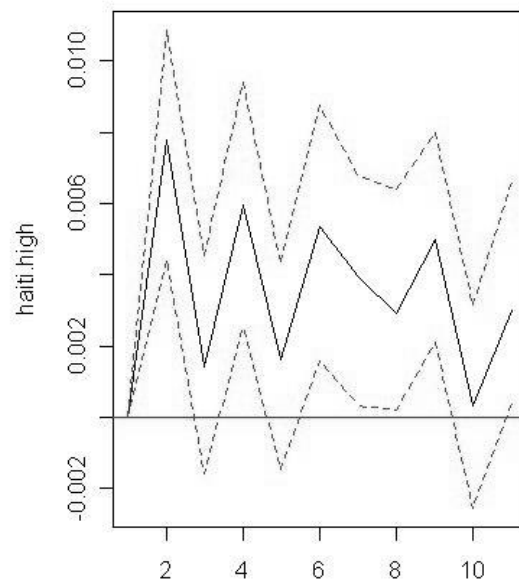
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.nyf



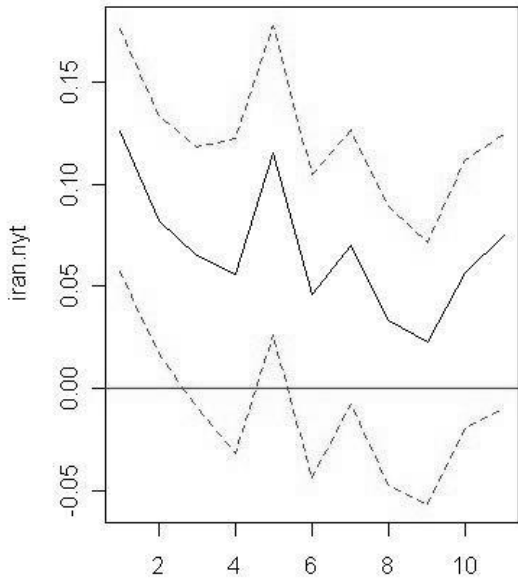
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.nyf



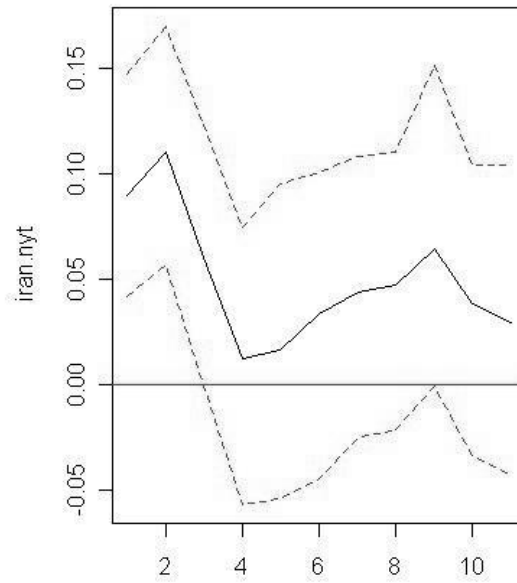
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.low



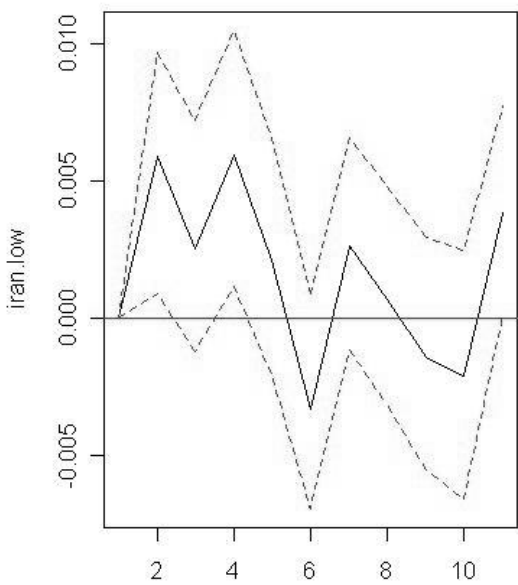
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.high



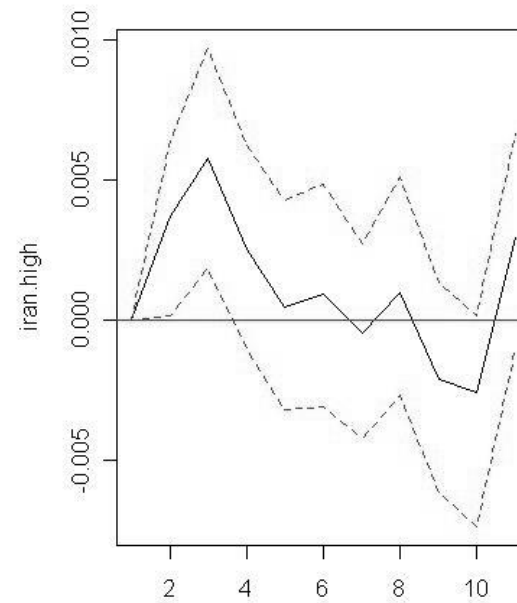
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.nytc



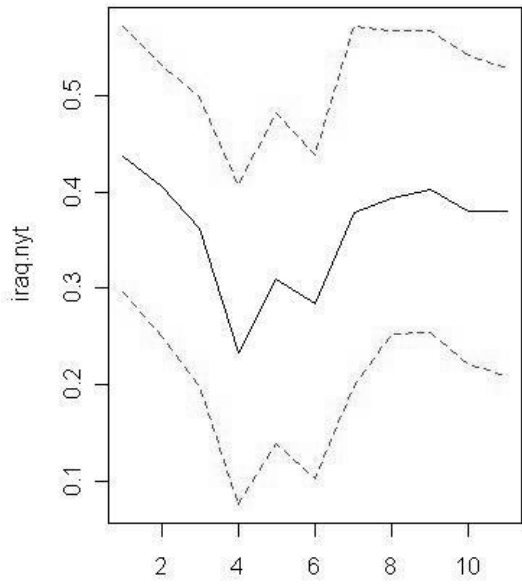
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.nytc



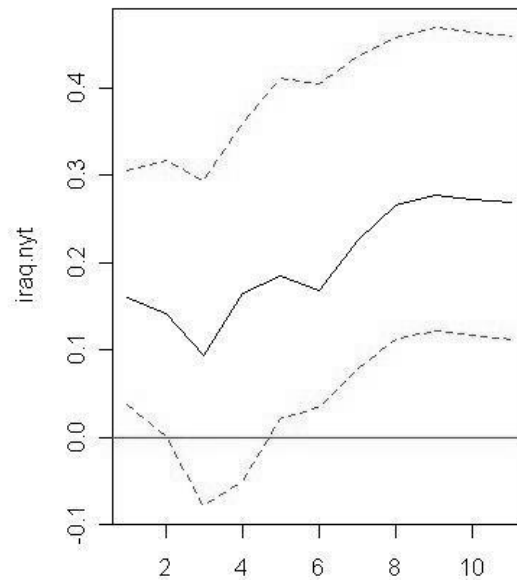
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.low



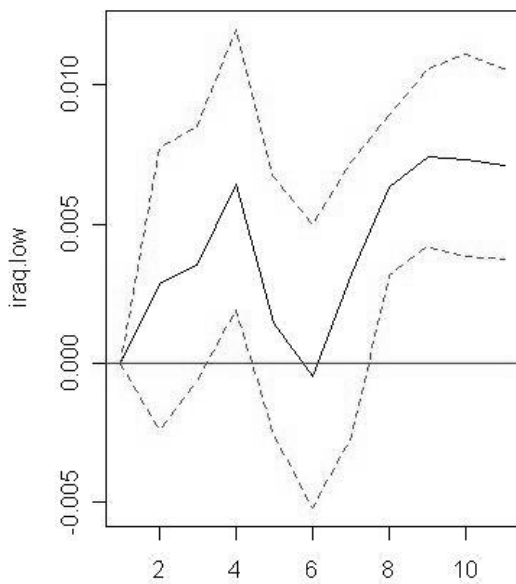
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.high



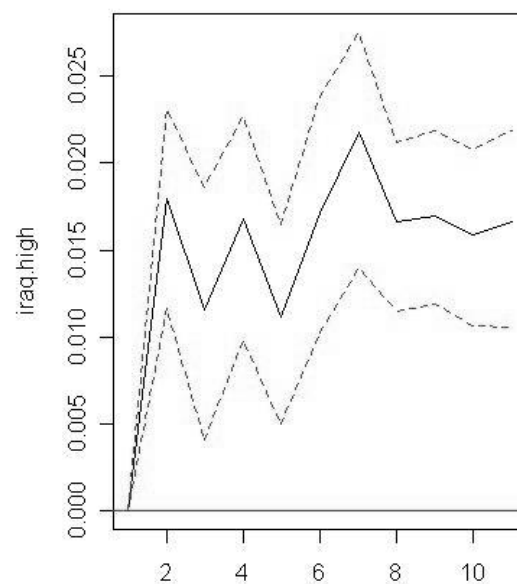
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.nyf



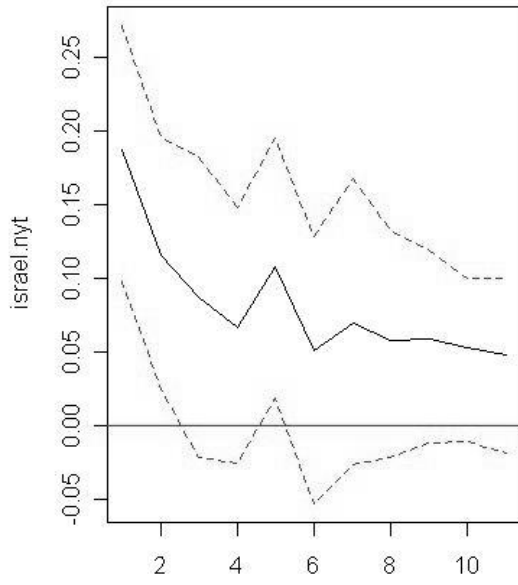
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.nyf



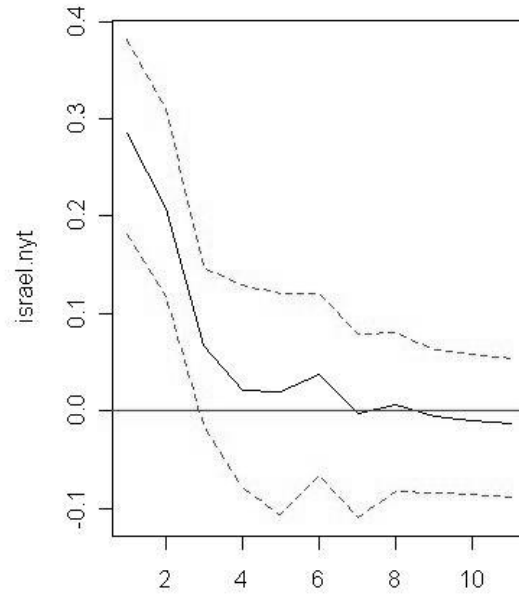
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.low



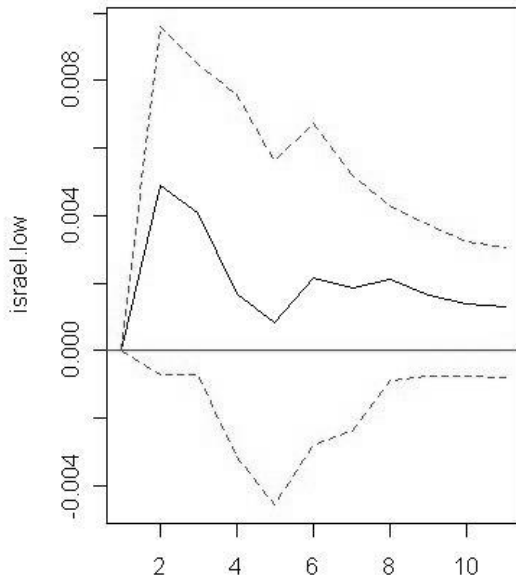
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.high



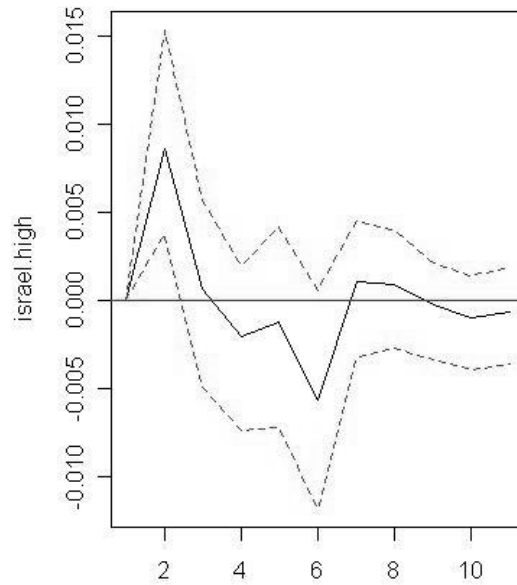
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.nyt



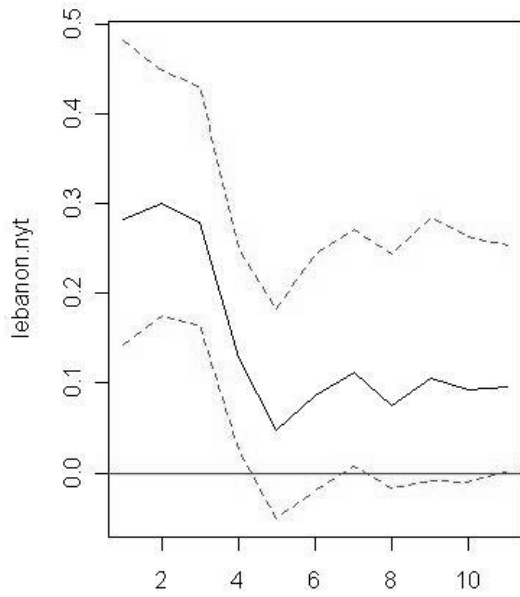
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.nyt



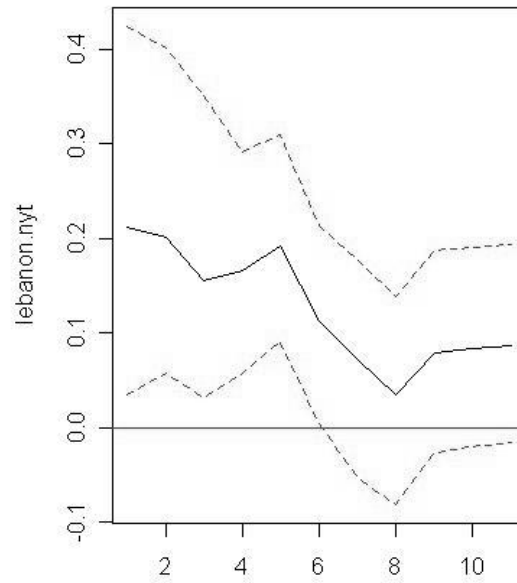
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.low



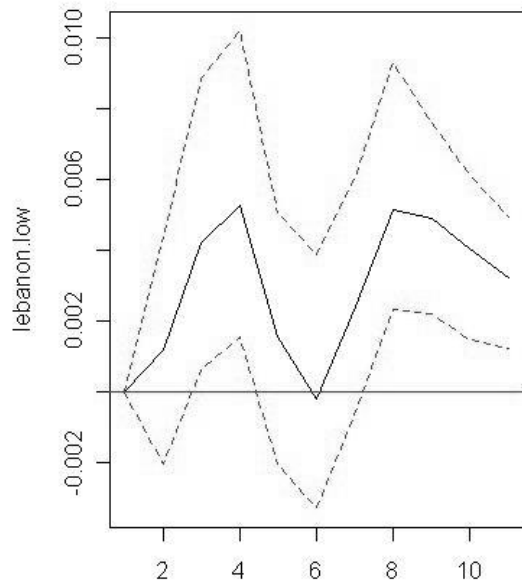
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.high



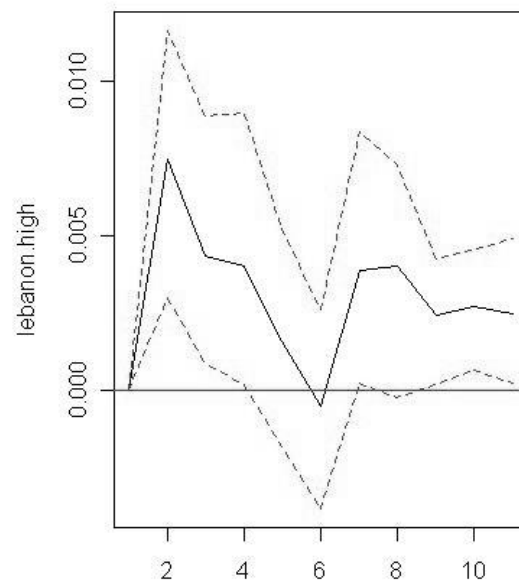
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

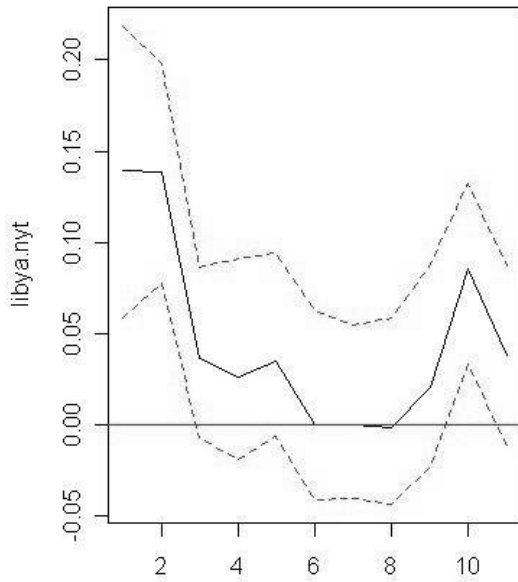
Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

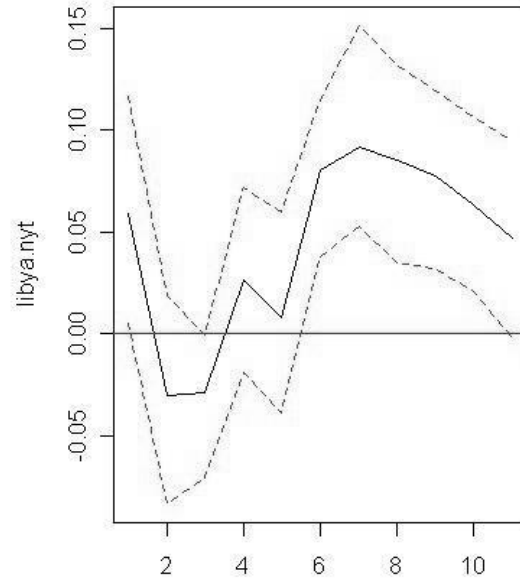


Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.low



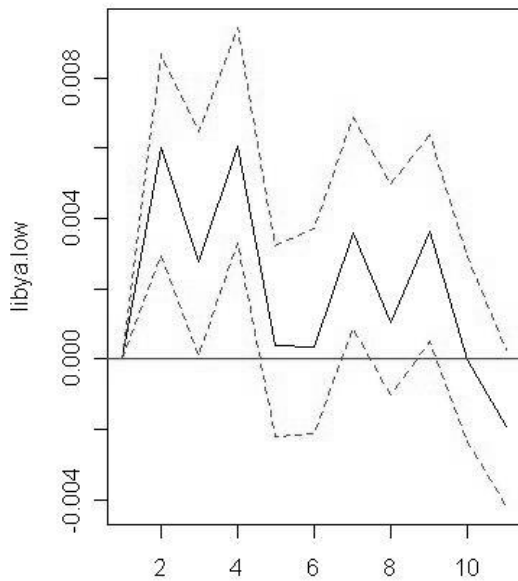
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.high



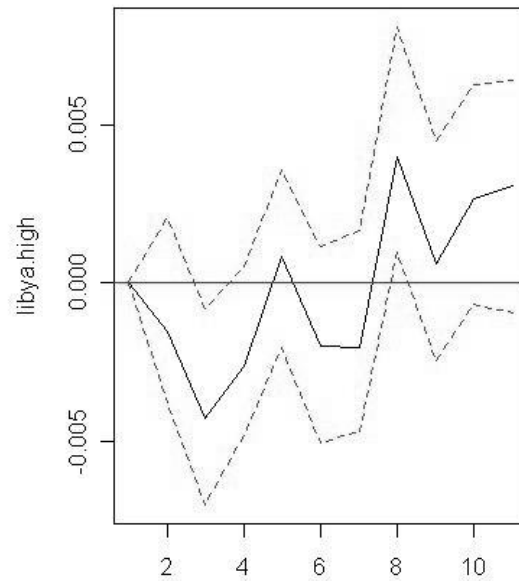
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.nyf



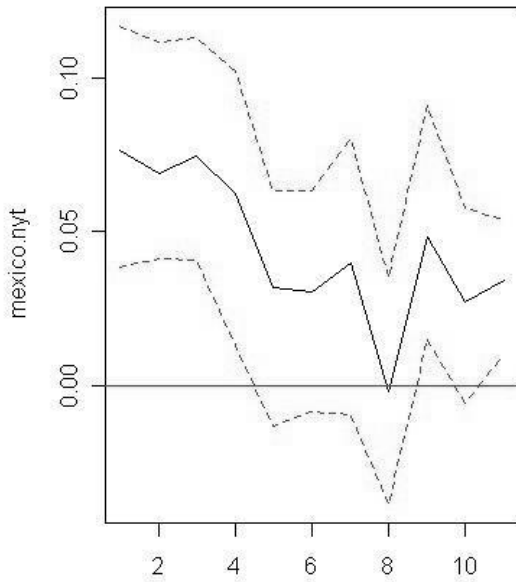
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.nyf



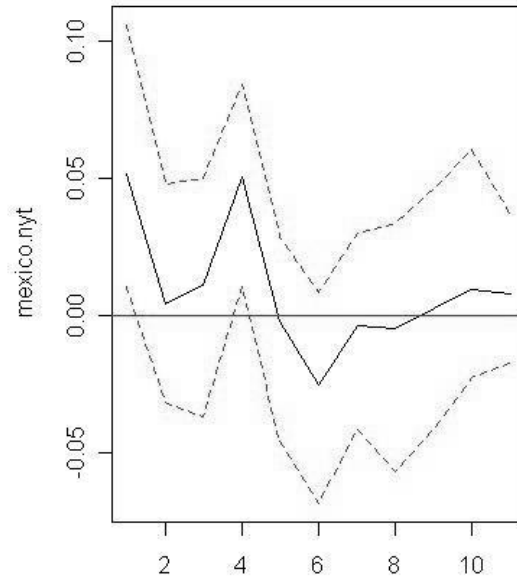
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.low



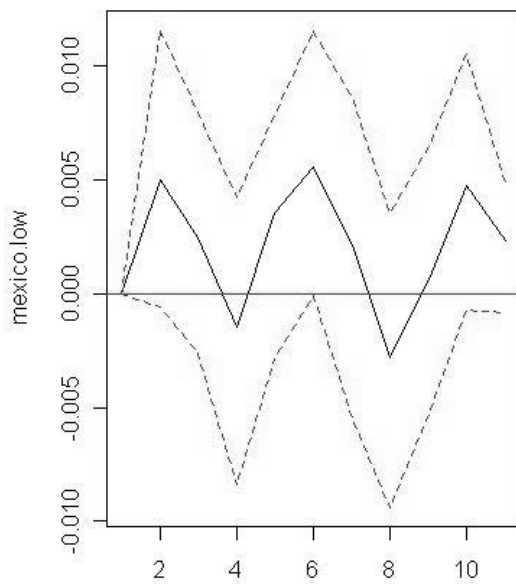
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.high



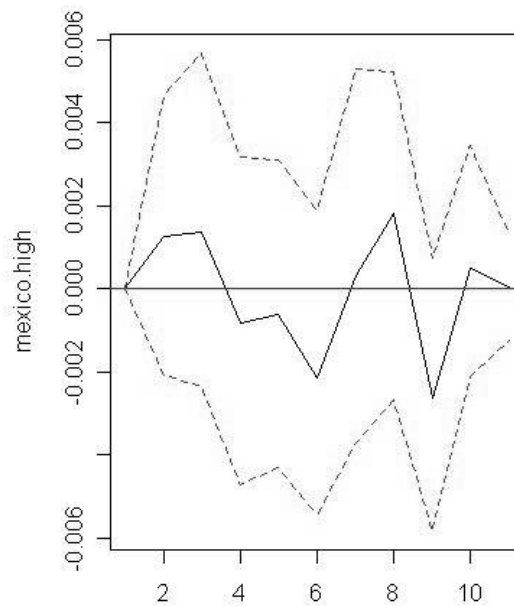
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.nyt



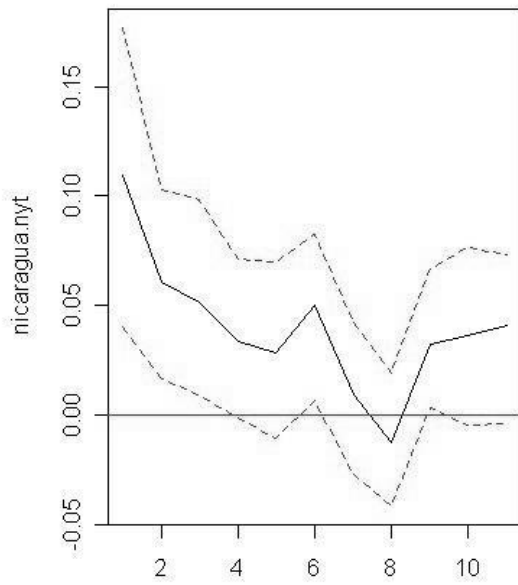
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.nyt



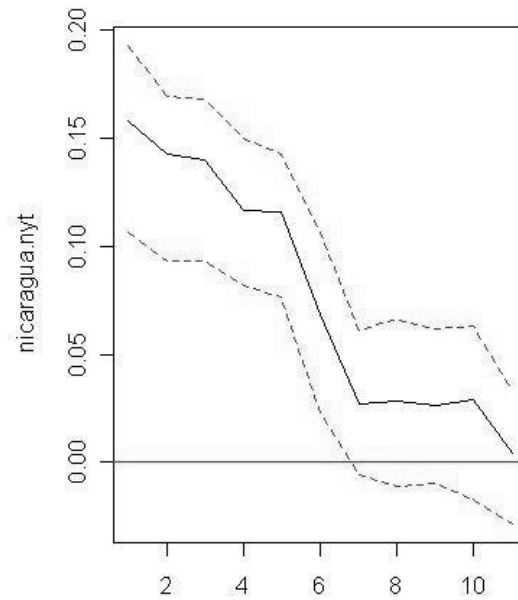
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.low



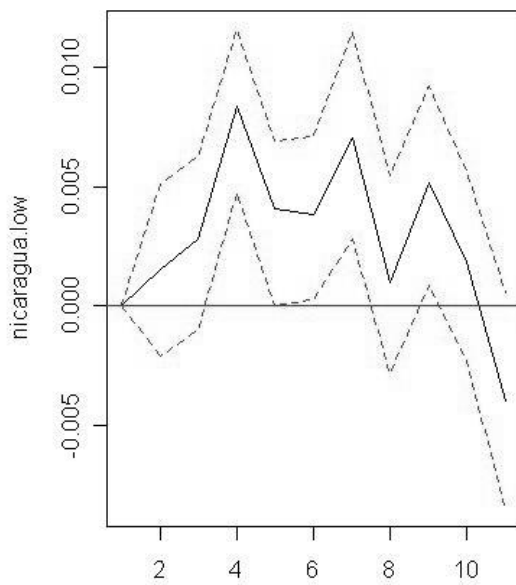
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.high



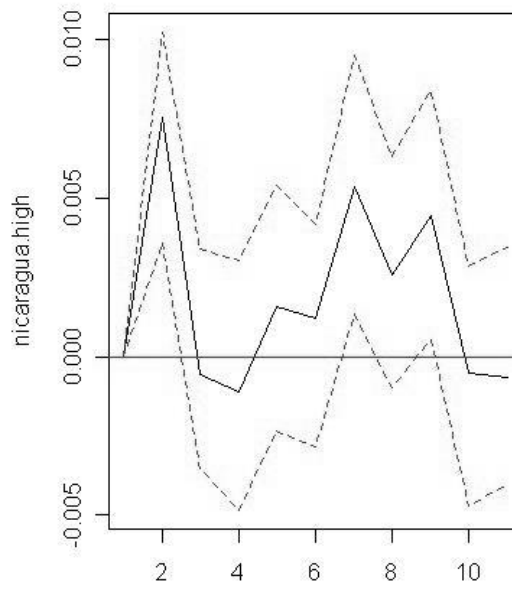
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.nyt



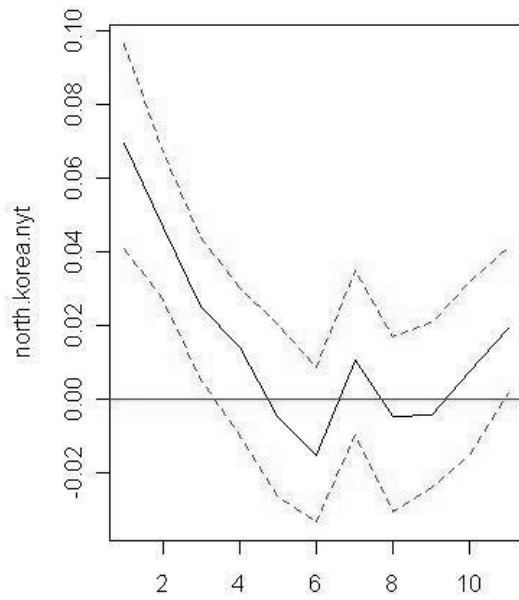
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.nyt



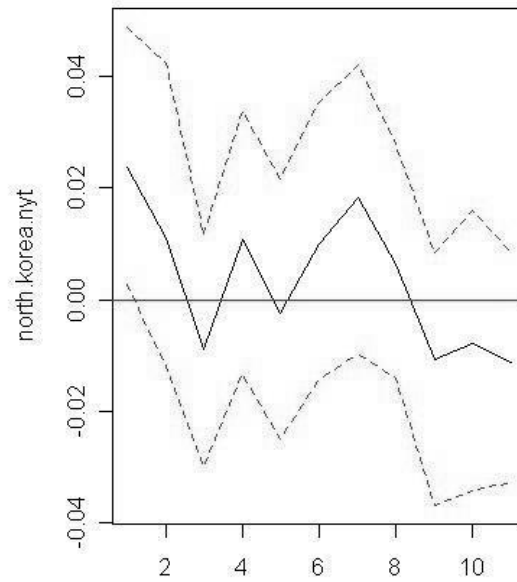
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.low



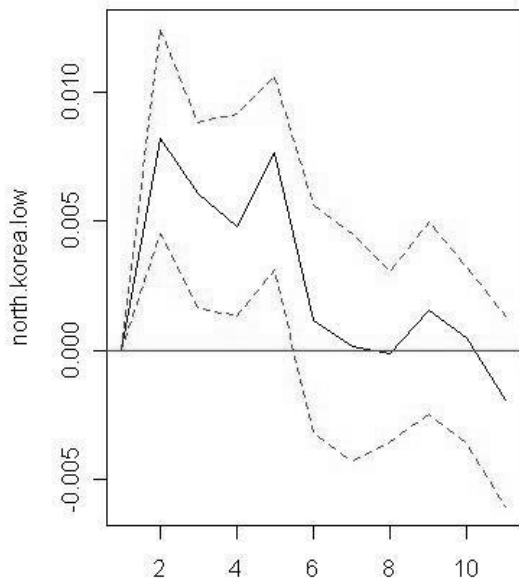
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.high



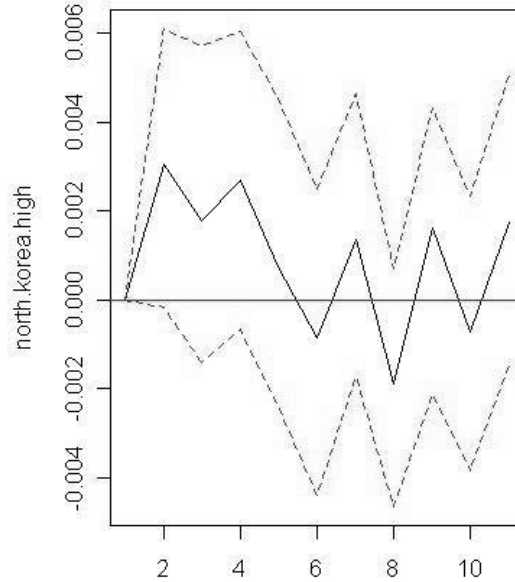
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.nyf



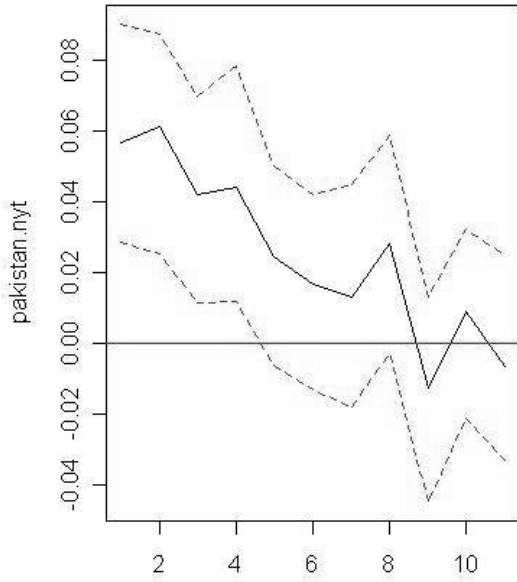
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.nyf



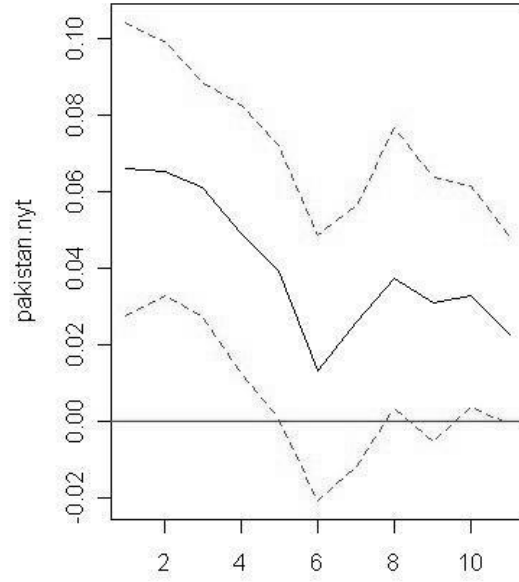
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.low



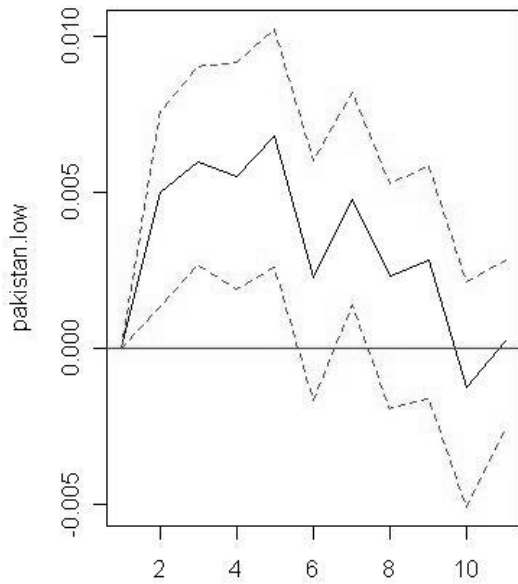
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.high



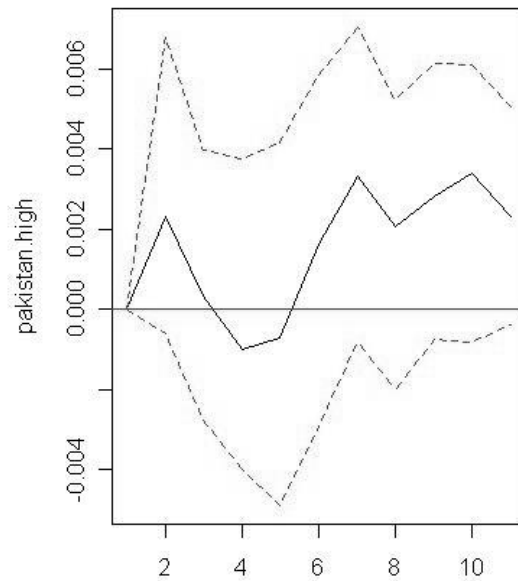
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.nyt



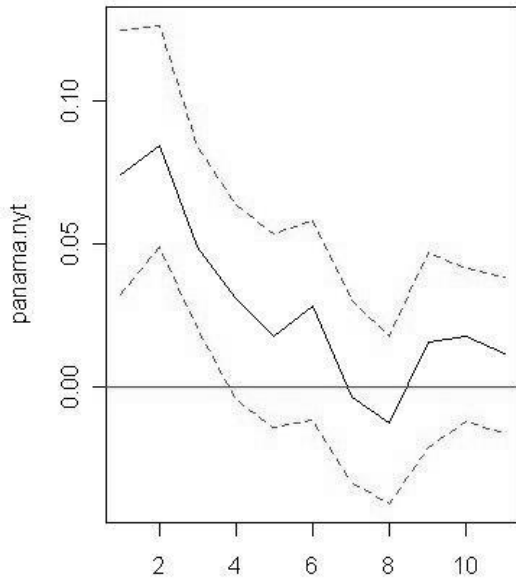
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.nyt



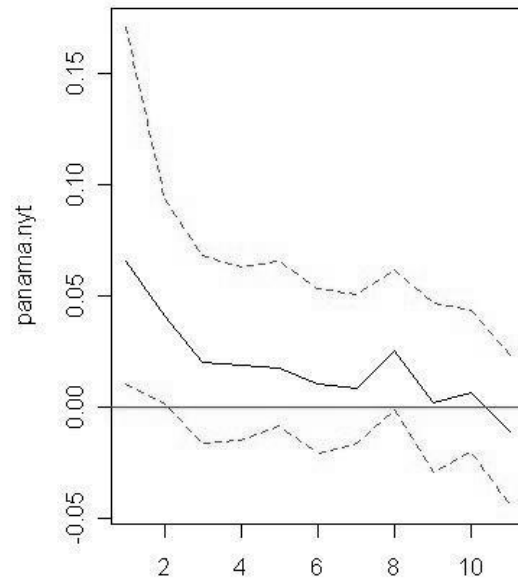
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.low



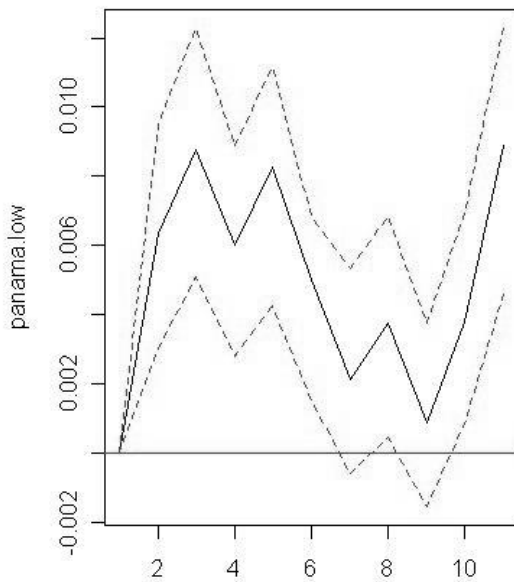
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.high



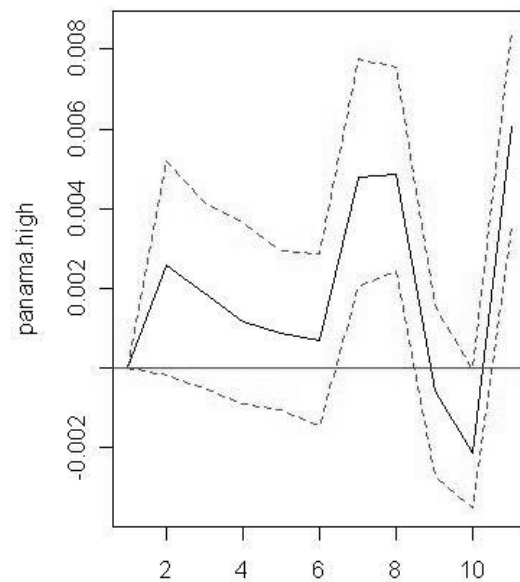
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

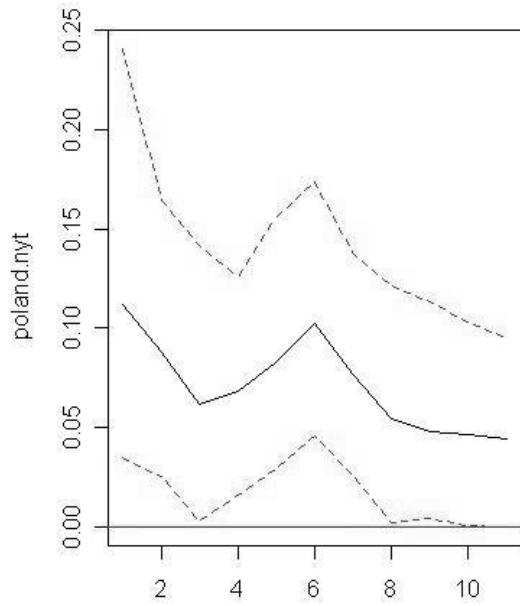
Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

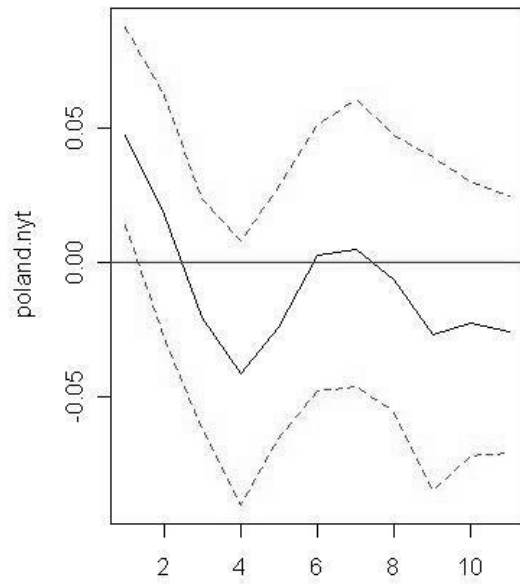


Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.low



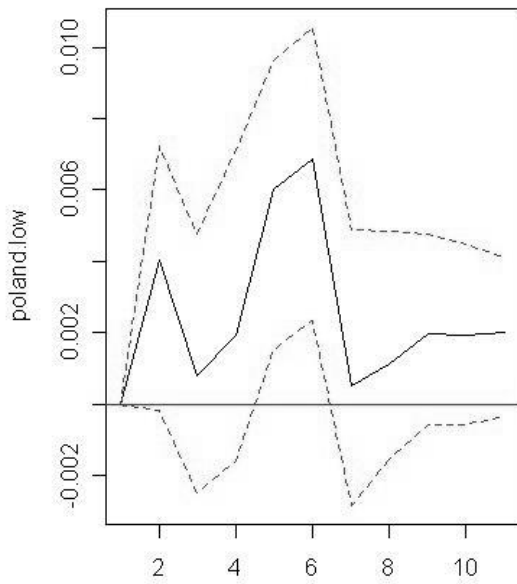
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.high



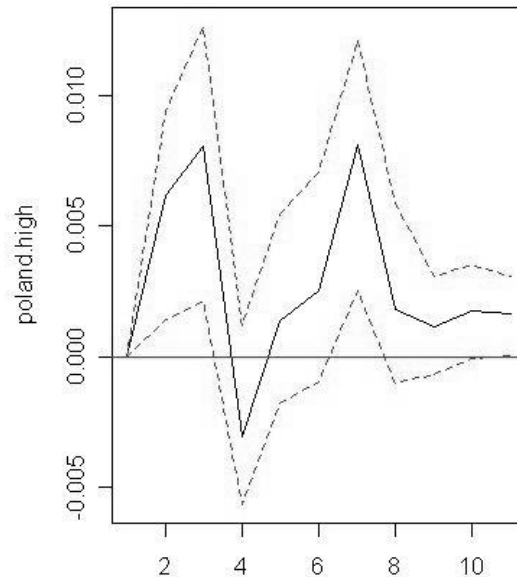
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.nyt



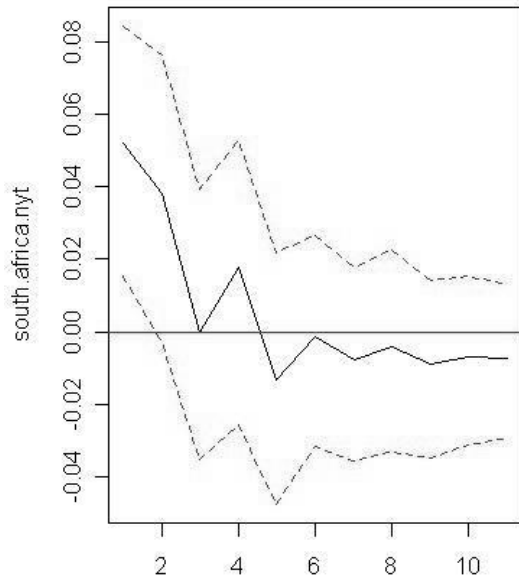
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.nyt



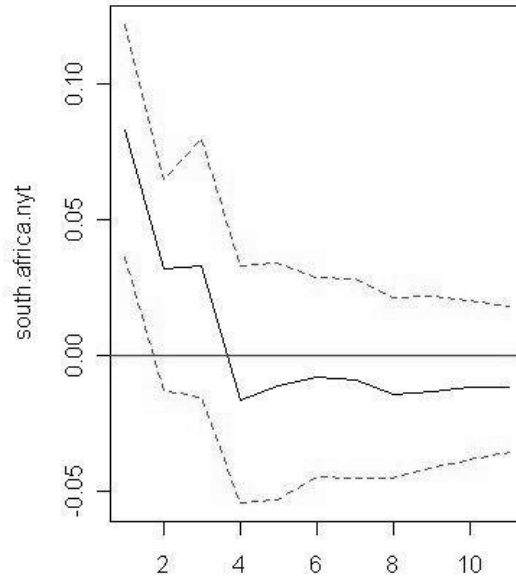
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.low



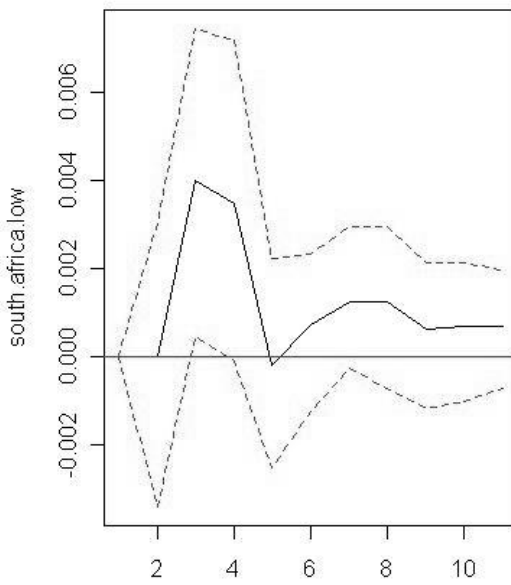
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.high



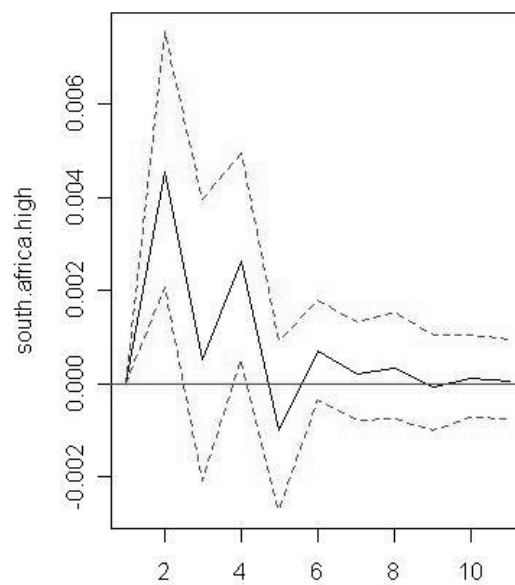
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.nyf



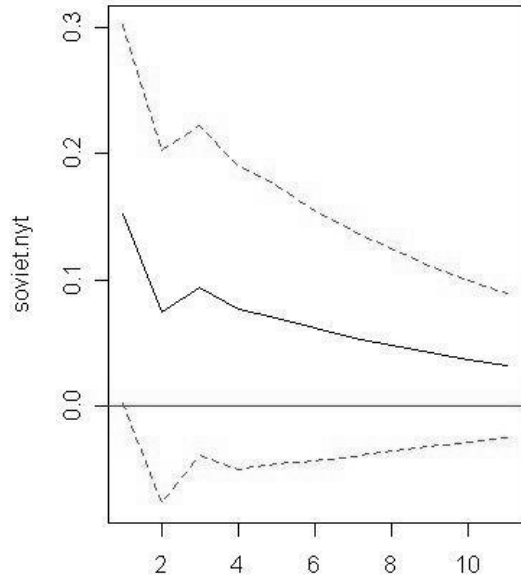
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.nyf



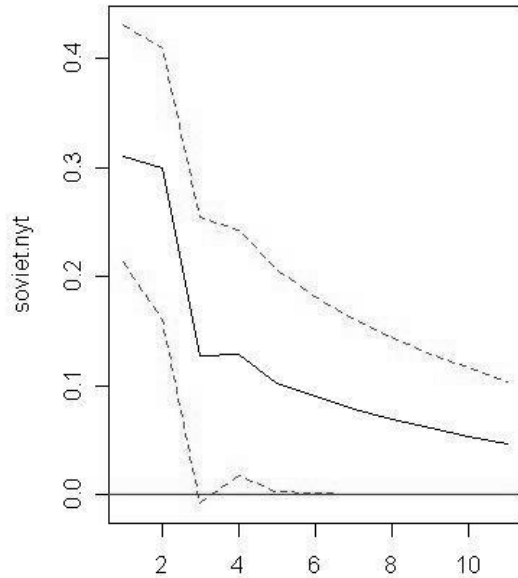
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from under.high



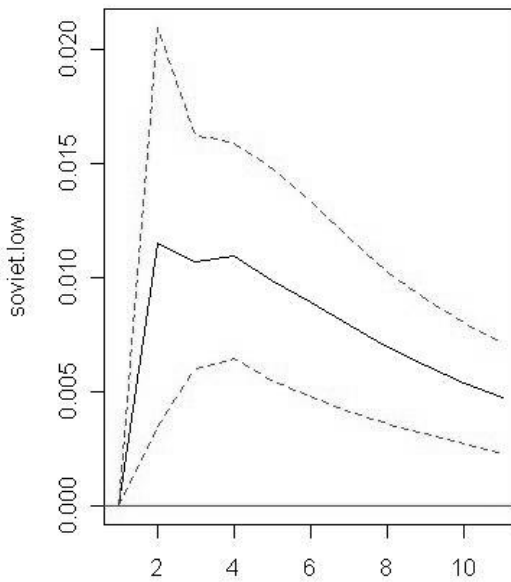
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from high



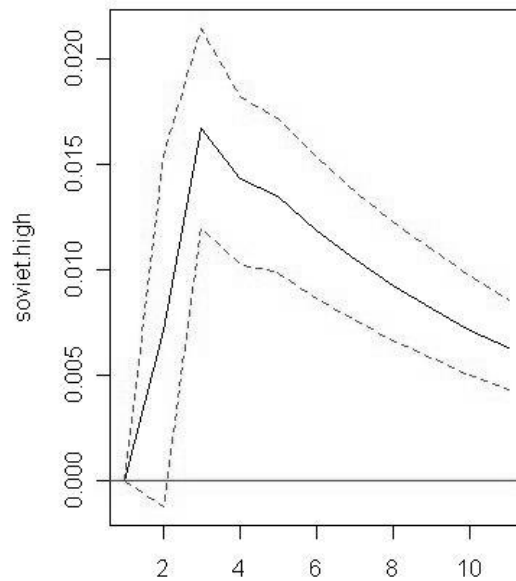
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.nyt



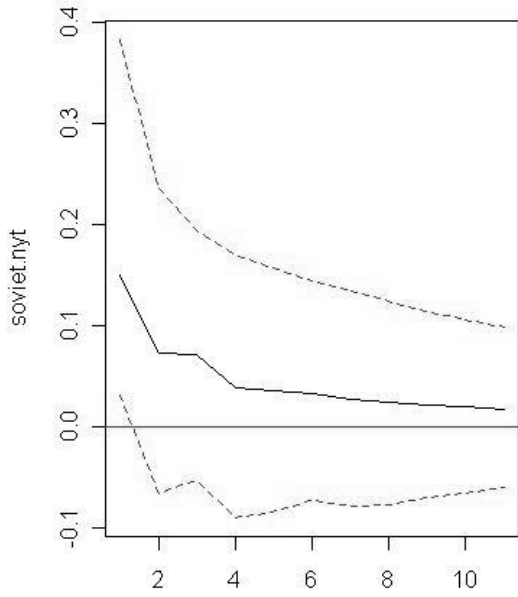
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.nyt



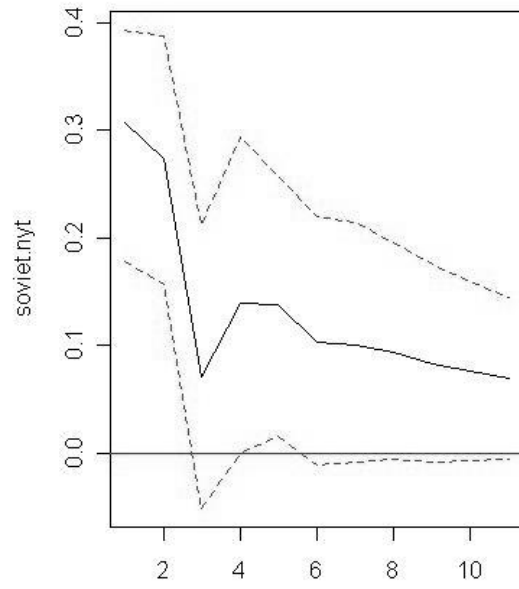
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.low



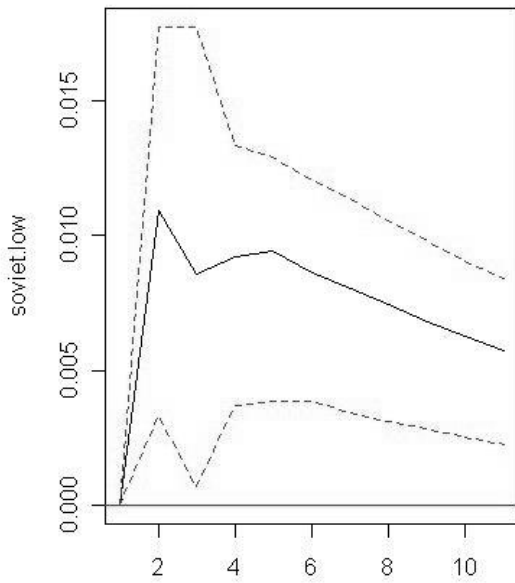
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.high



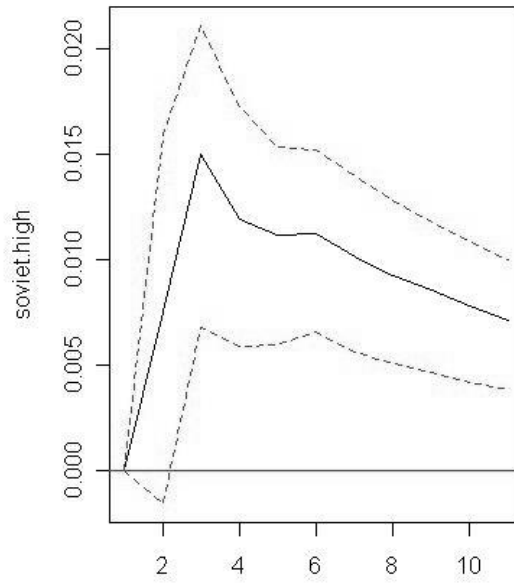
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.nyf



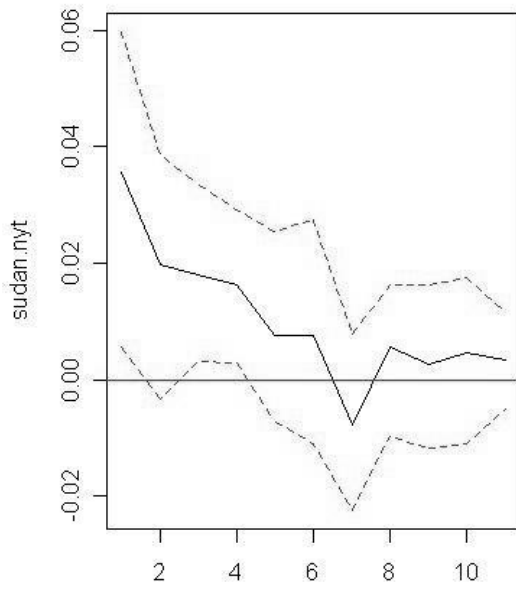
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.nyf



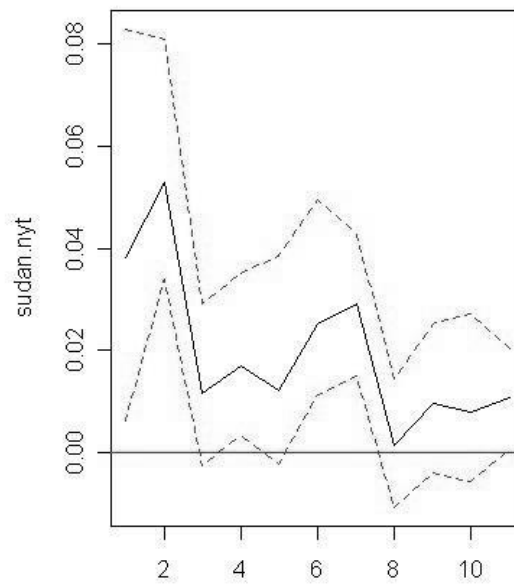
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.low



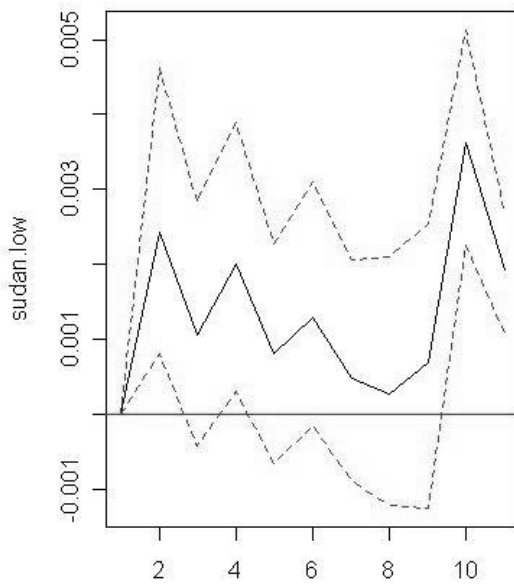
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.high



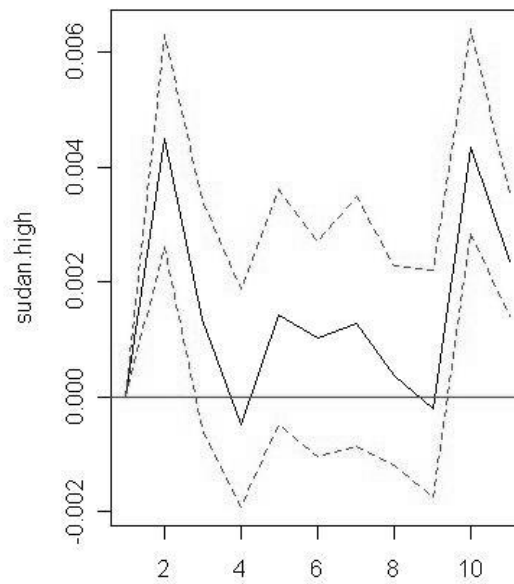
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

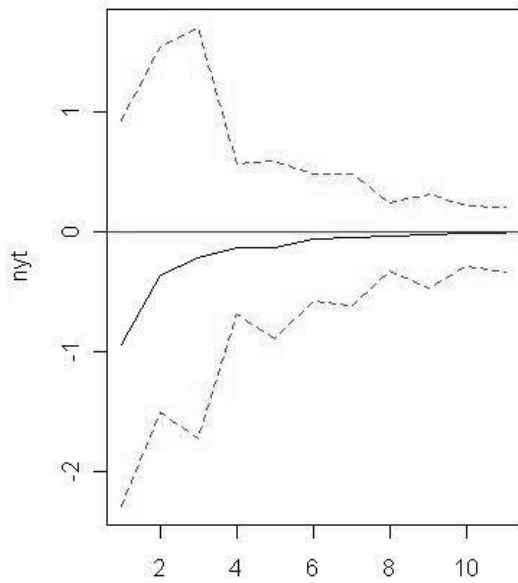
Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

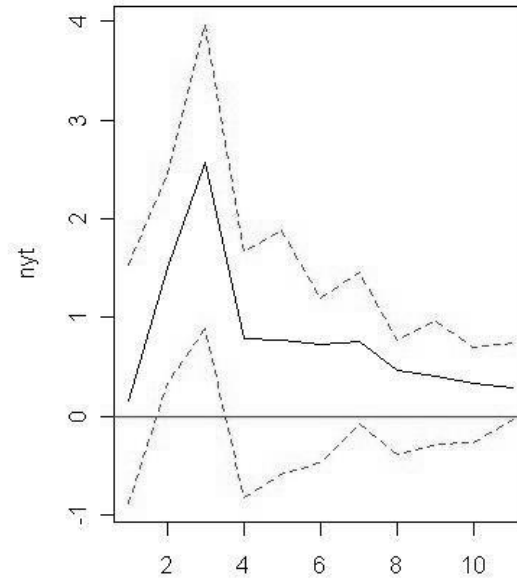
ICB# 955

Orthogonal Impulse Response from Low HR Speech



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

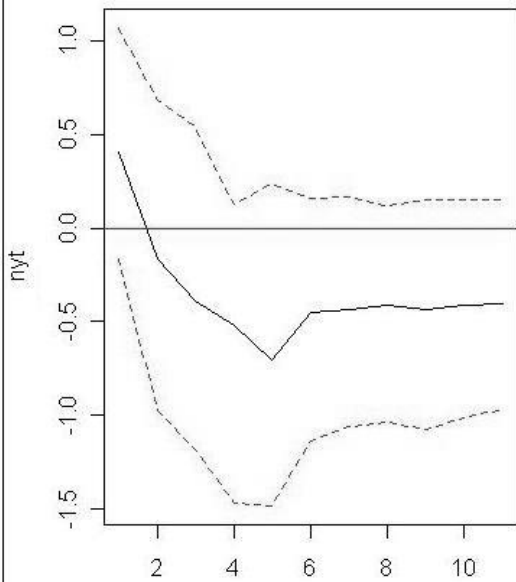
Orthogonal Impulse Response from High HR Speech



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

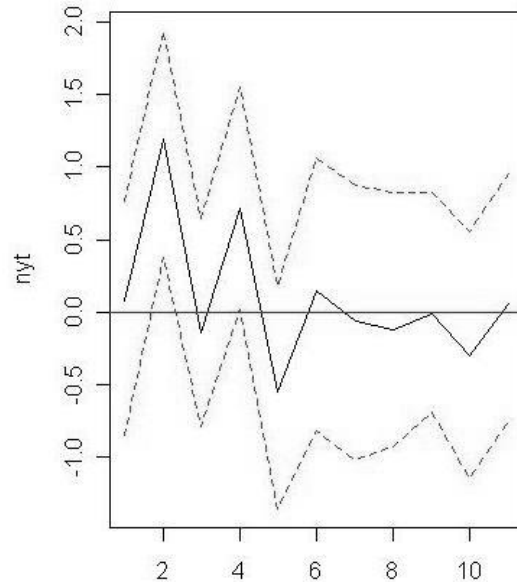
ICB# 970

Orthogonal Impulse Response from Low HR Speech



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from High HR Speech

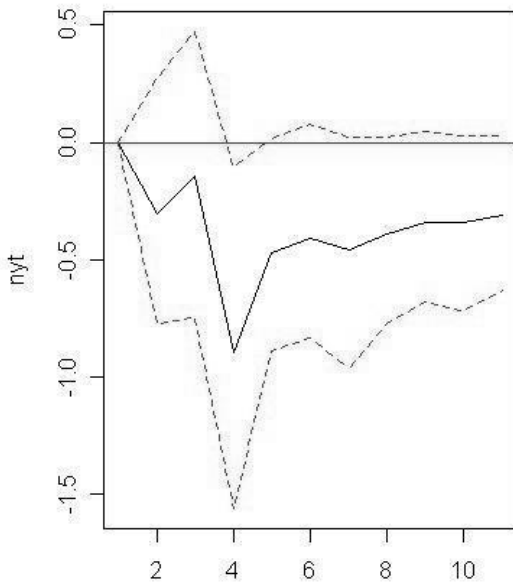


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs



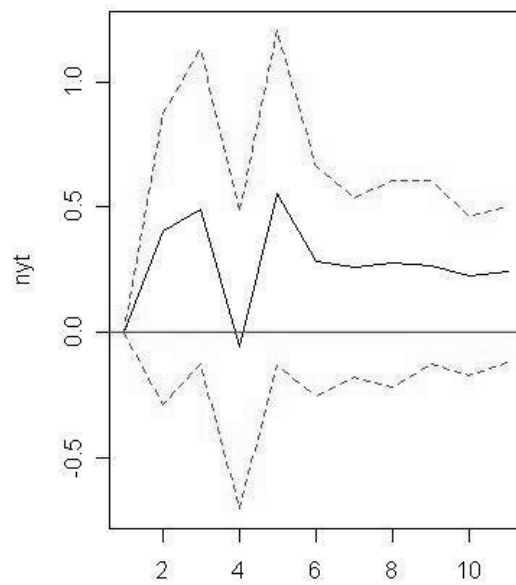
ICB# 846

Orthogonal Impulse Response from Low HR Speech



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

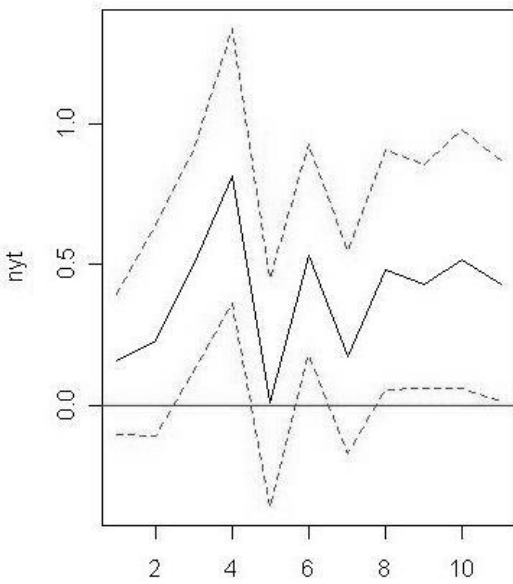
Orthogonal Impulse Response from High HR Speech



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

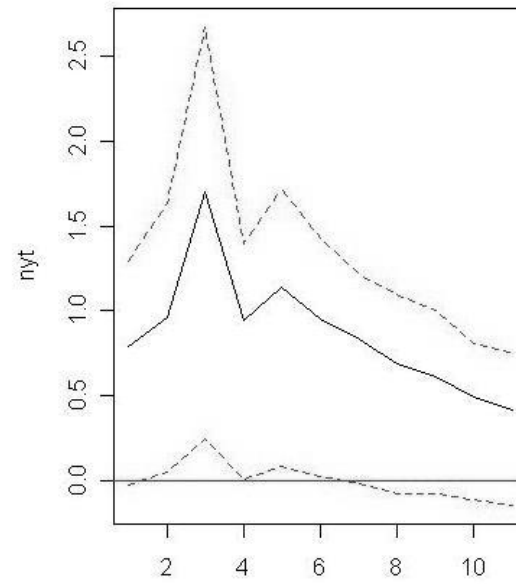
ICB#890

Orthogonal Impulse Response from Low HR Speech



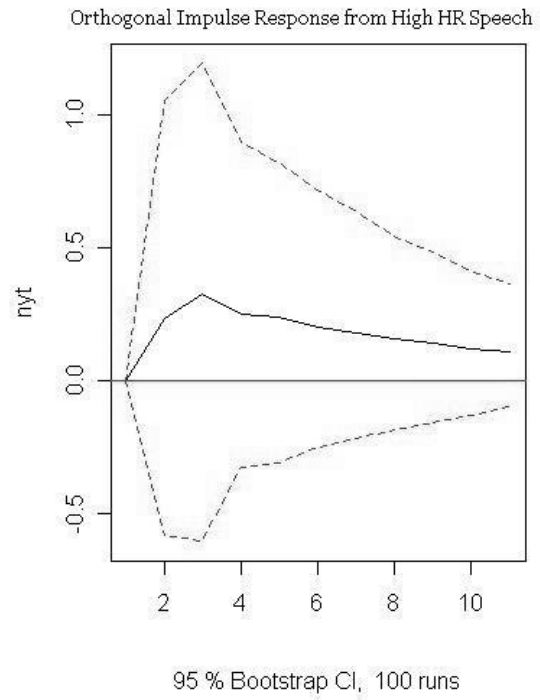
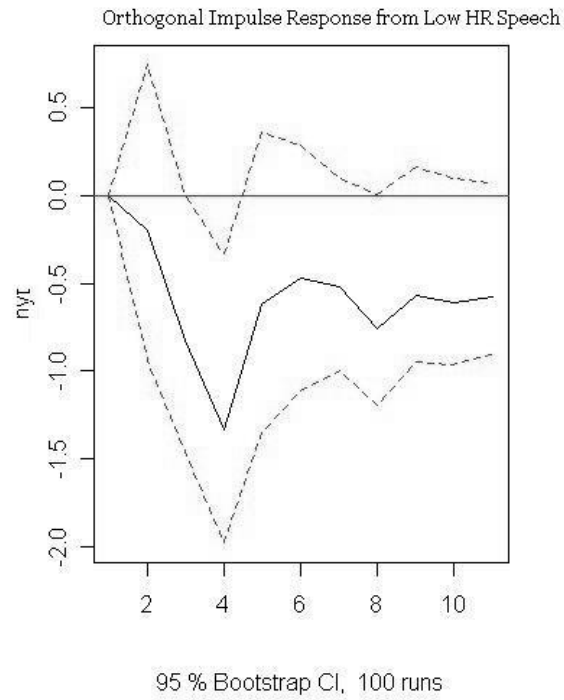
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from High HR Speech

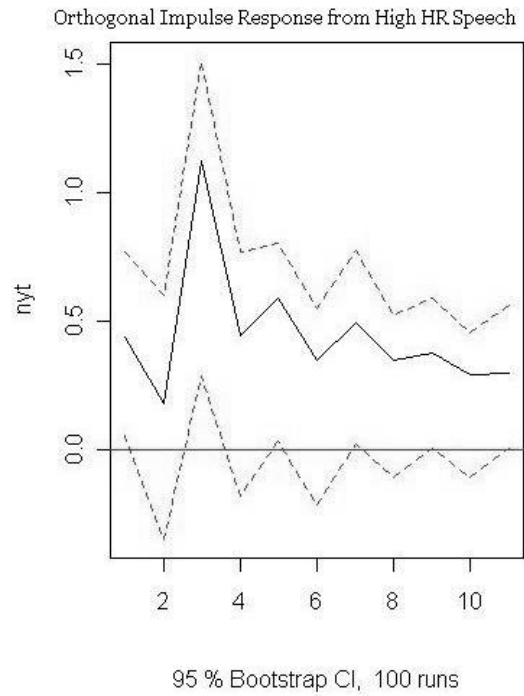
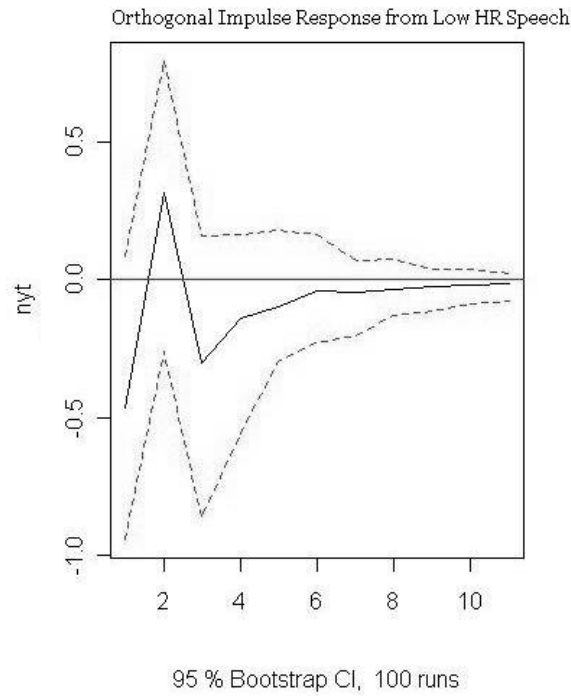


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

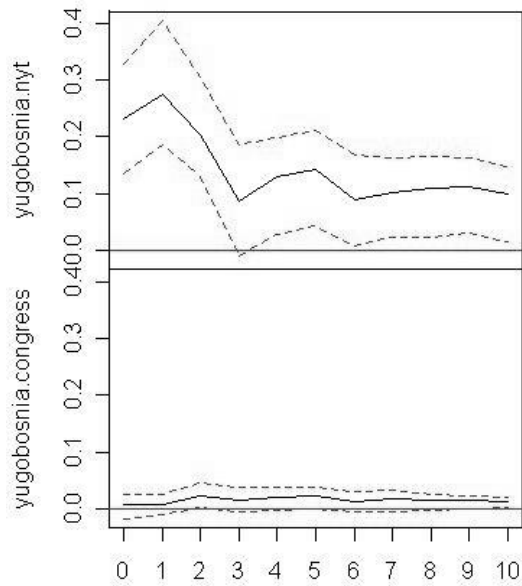
ICB#933



ICB#945

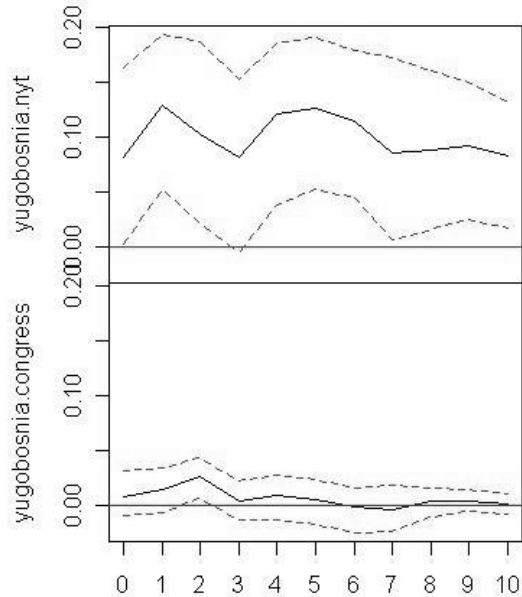


Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.speech



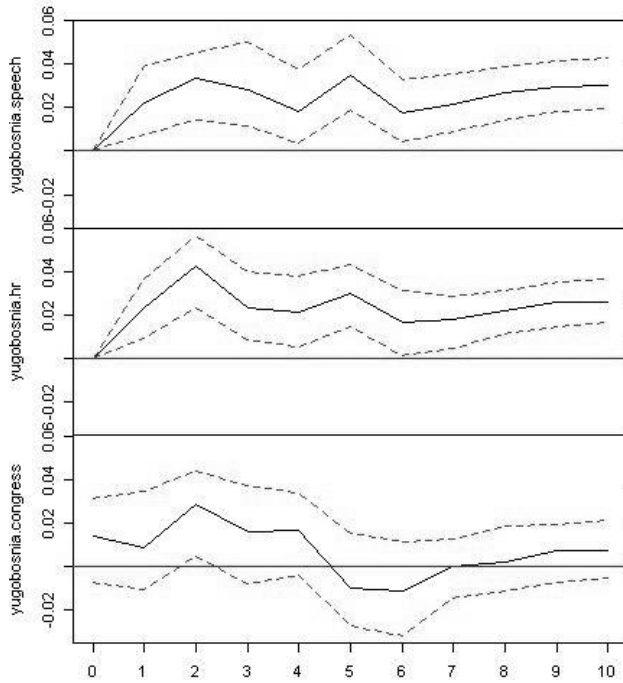
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.hr



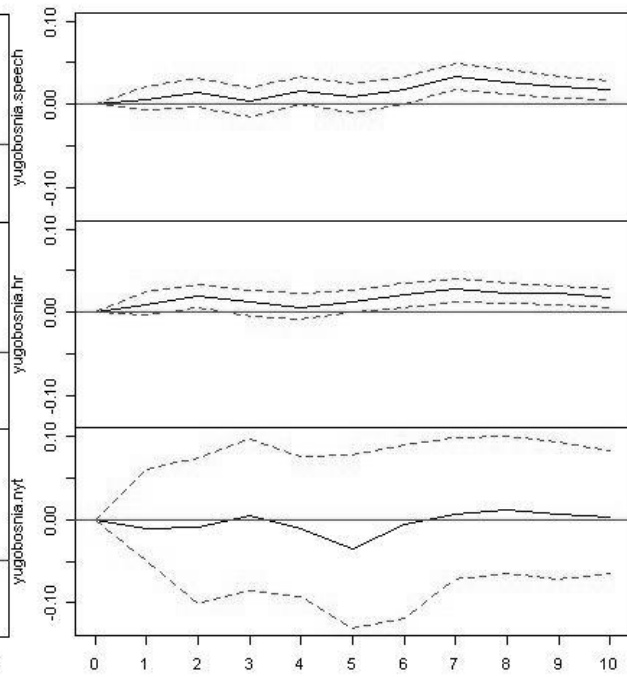
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.nyf



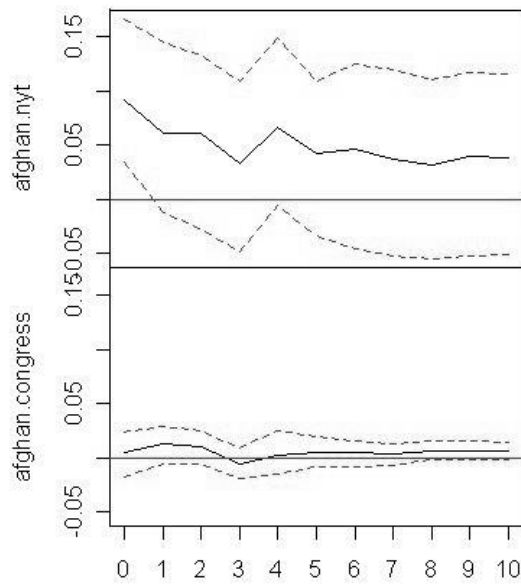
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from yugobosnia.congress



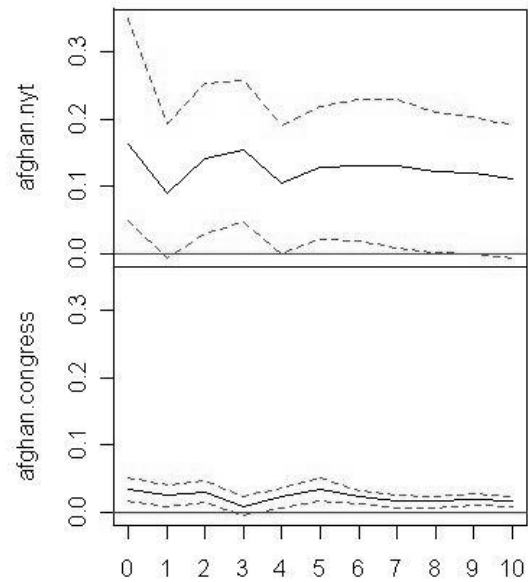
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.speech



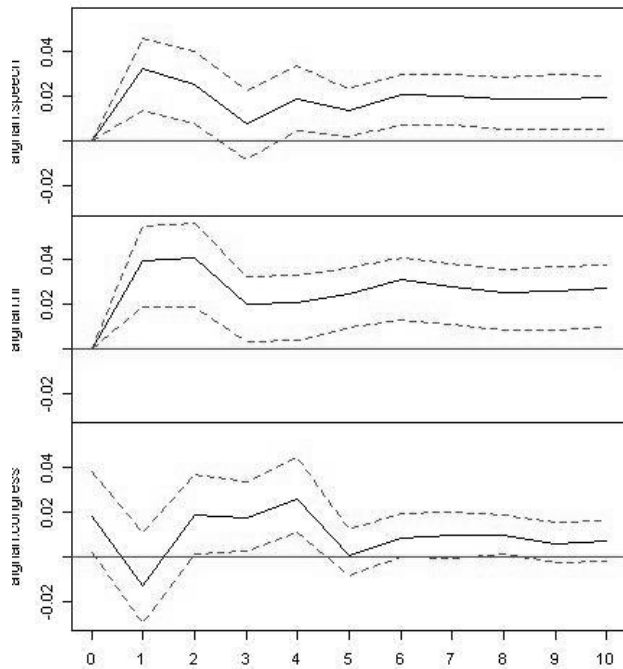
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.hr



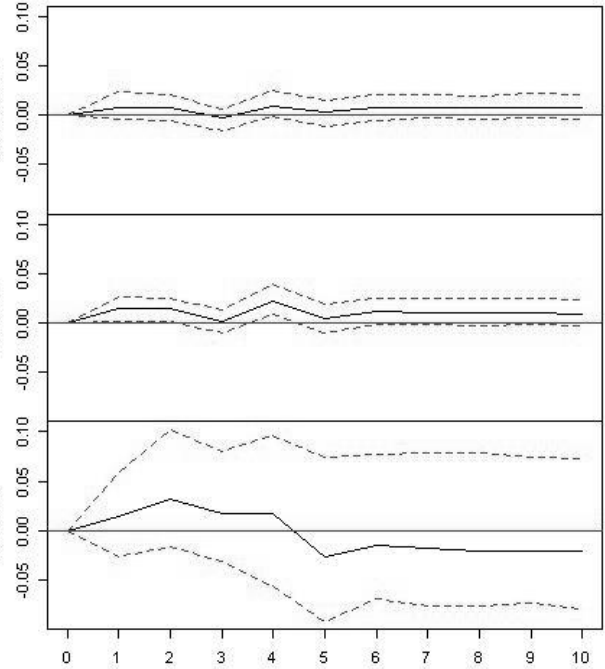
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.nyt



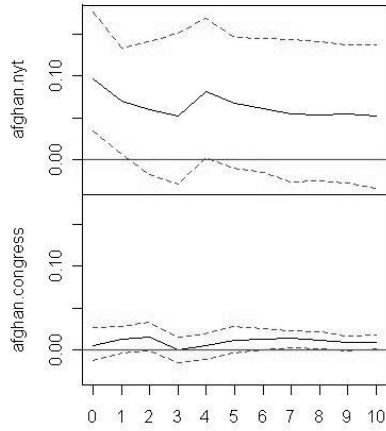
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.congress

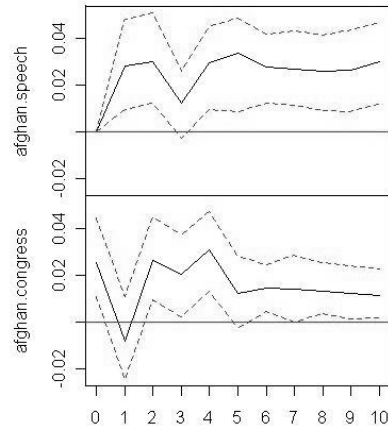


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

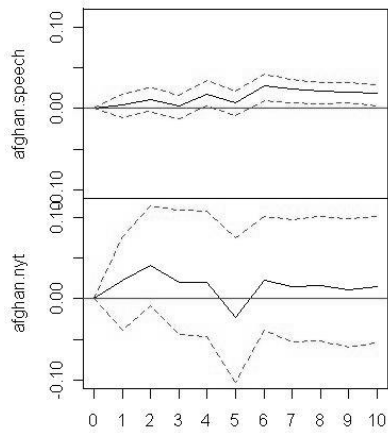
Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.speech



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs  
Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.nyt

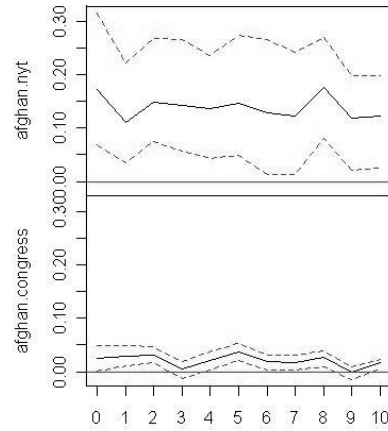


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs  
Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.congress

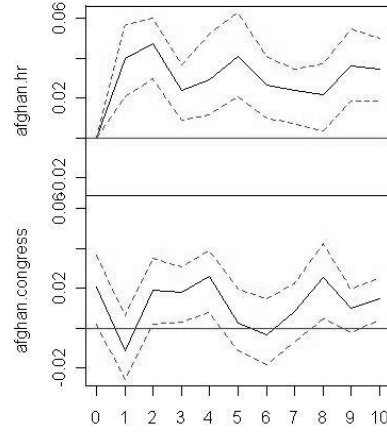


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.hr

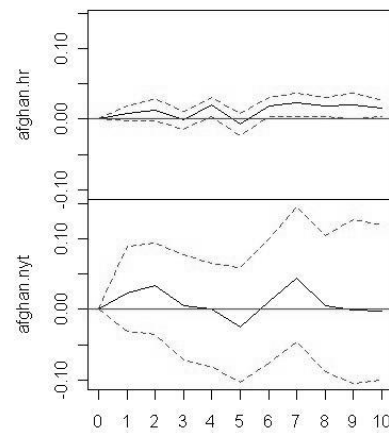


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs  
Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.nyt

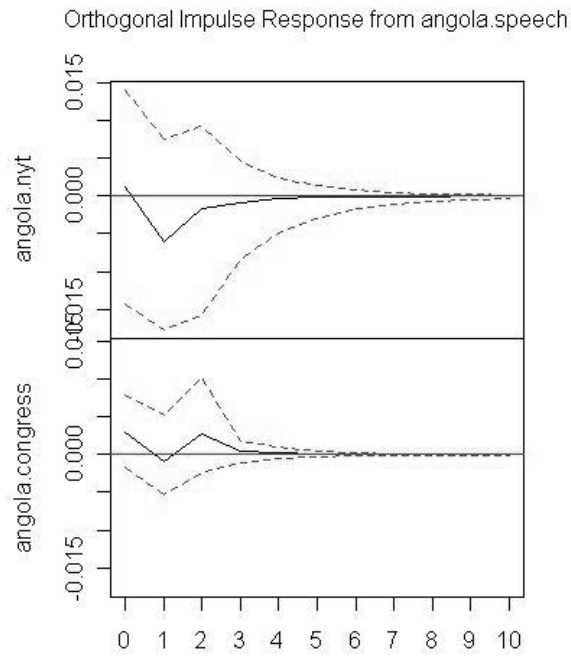


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

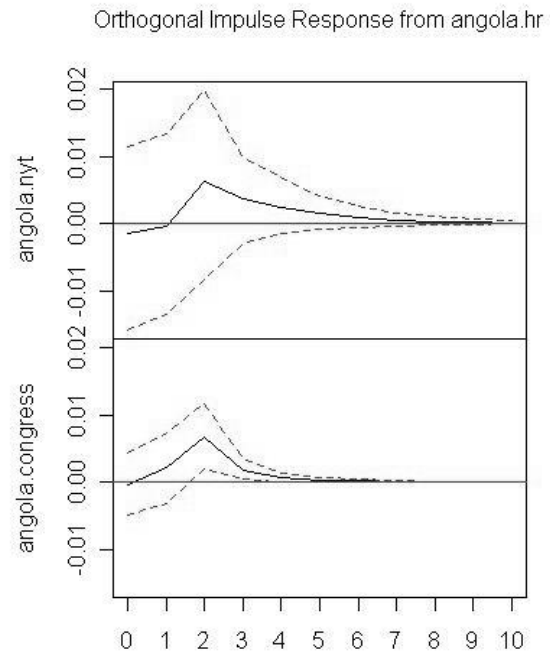
Orthogonal Impulse Response from afghan.congress



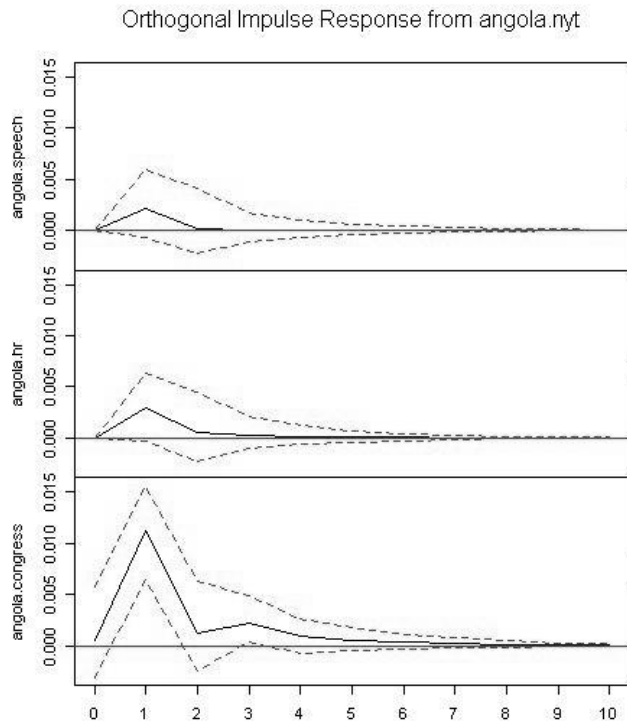
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs



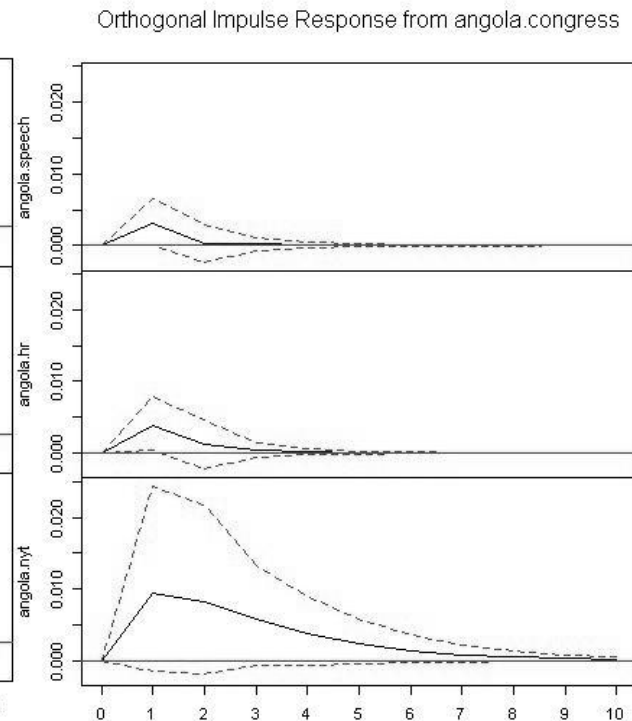
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs



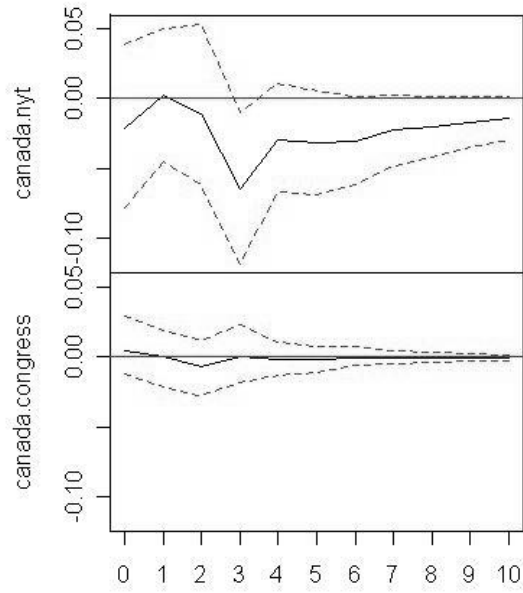
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

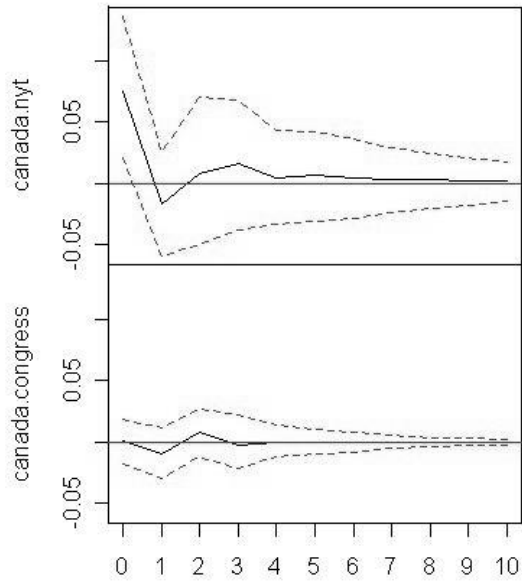


Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.hr



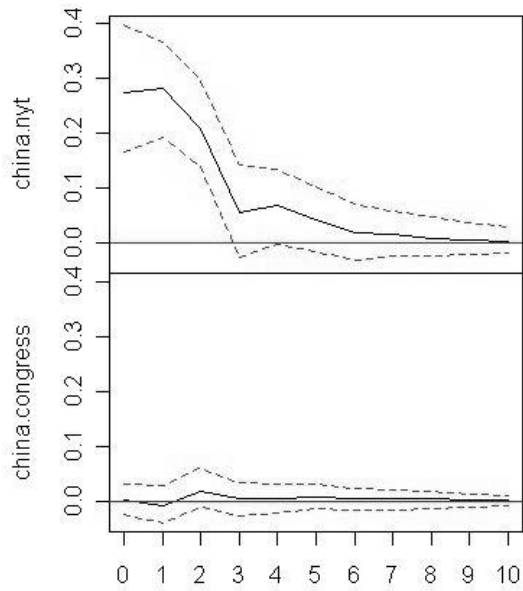
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from canada.speech



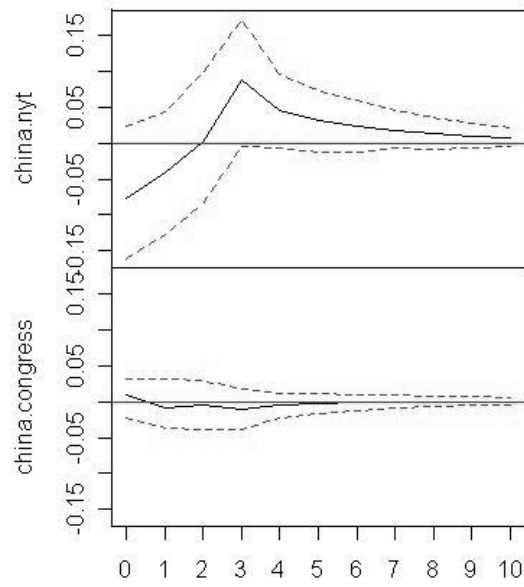
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.speech



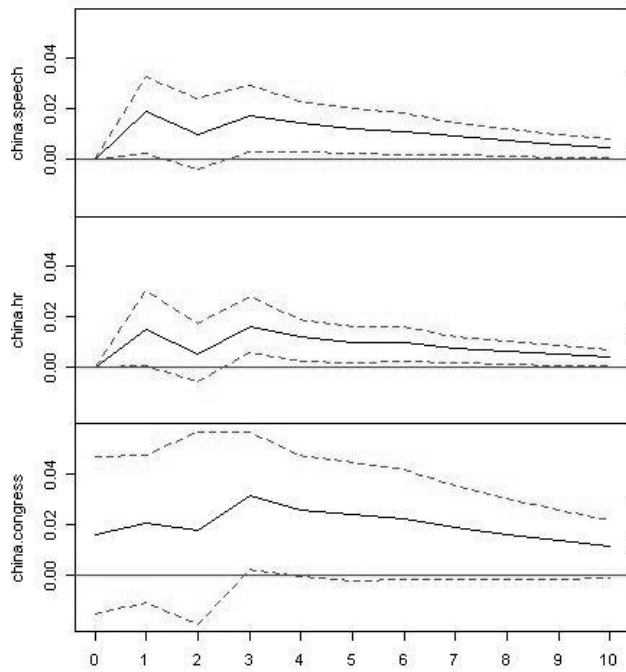
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.hr



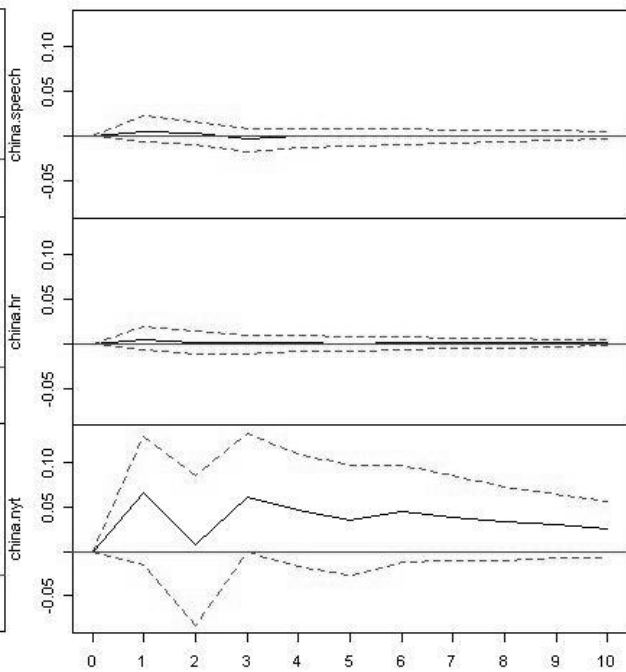
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.nyt



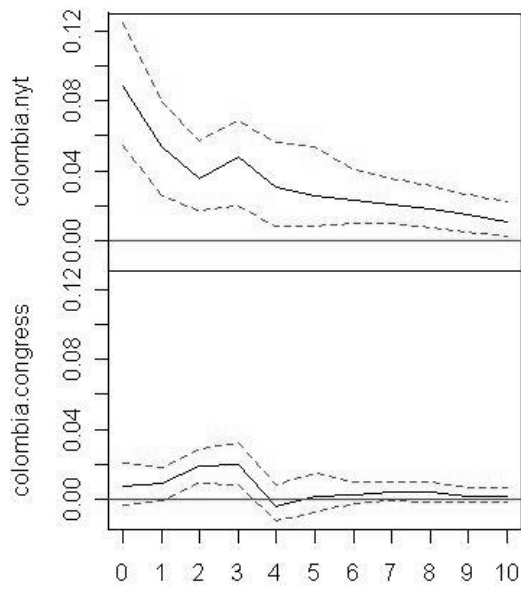
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from china.congress



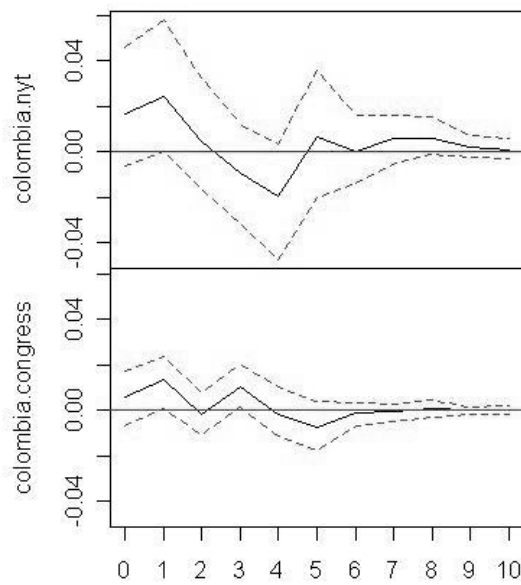
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.speech



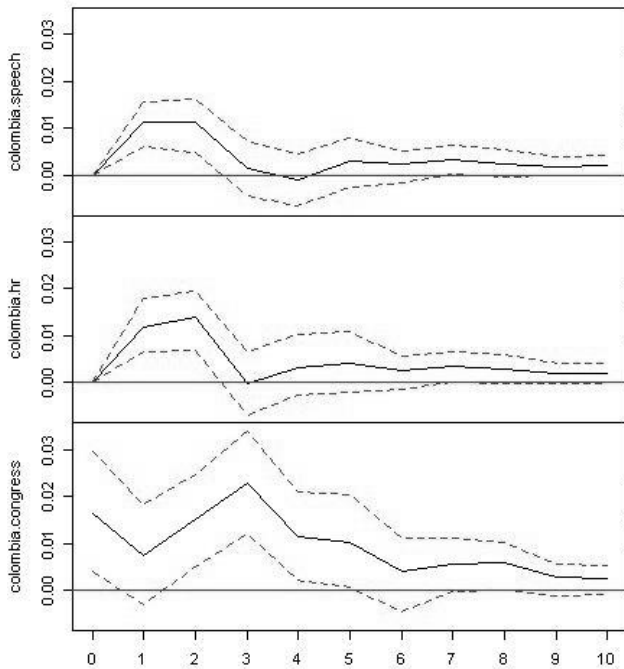
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.hr



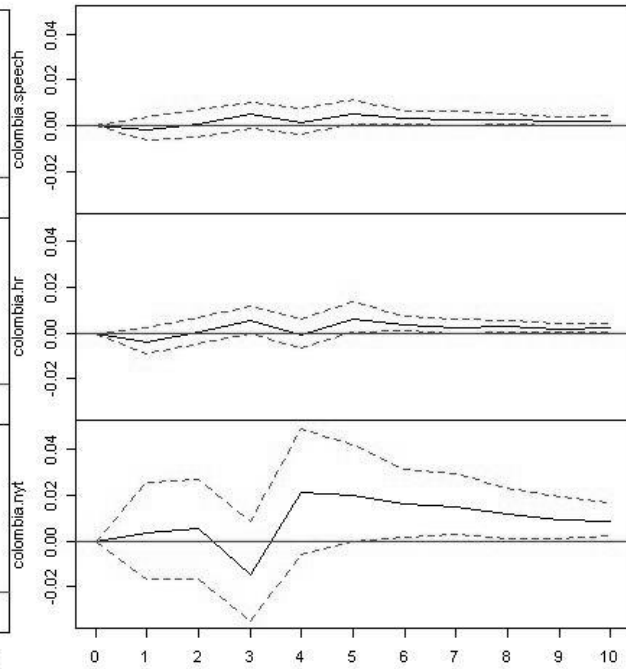
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.nyt



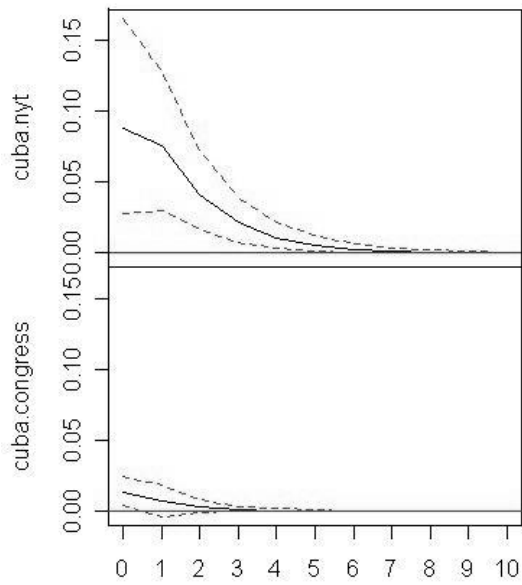
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from colombia.congress



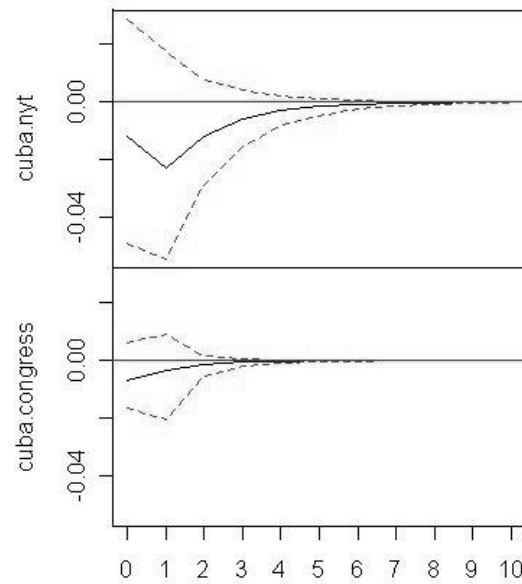
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.speech



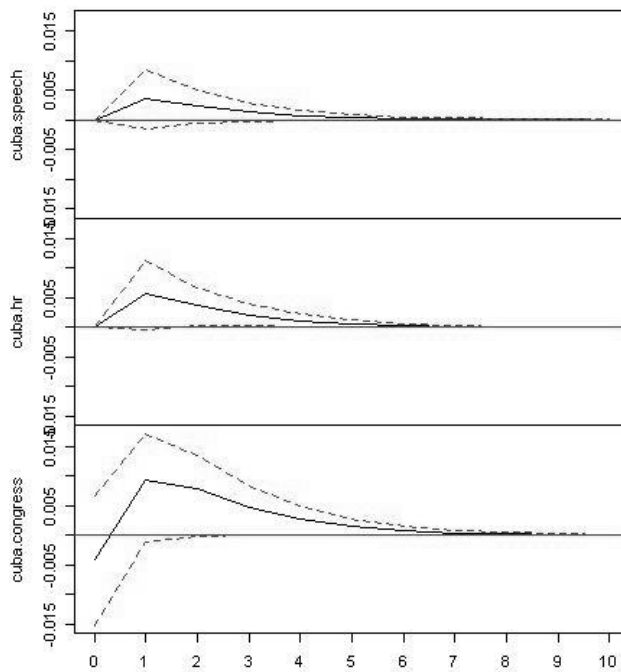
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.hr



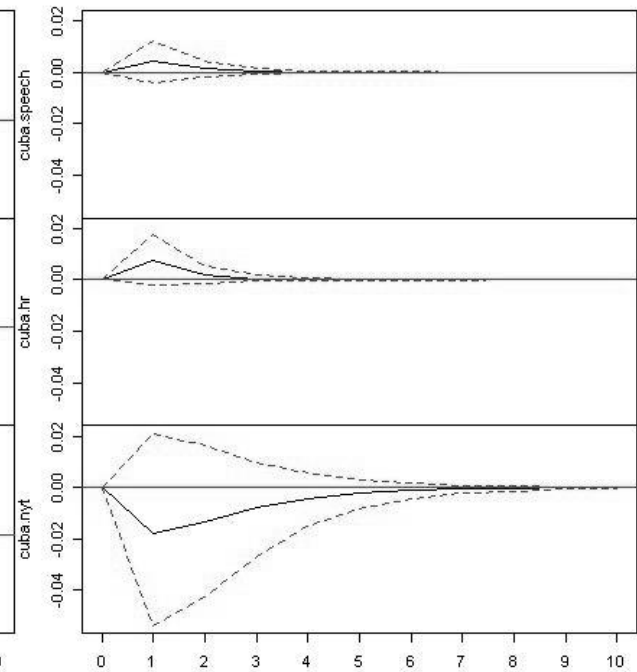
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.nyt



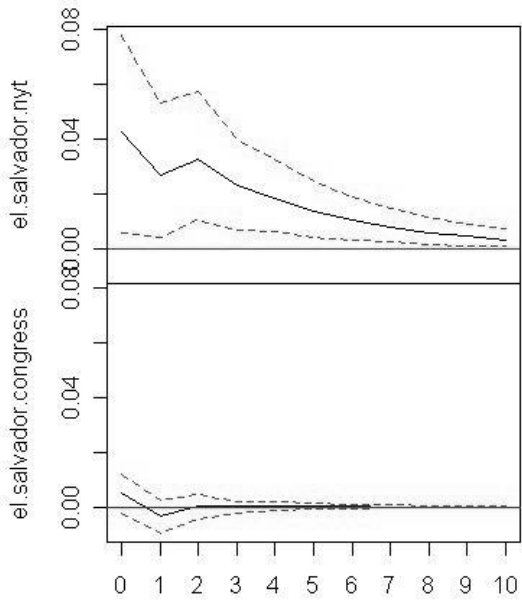
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from cuba.congress



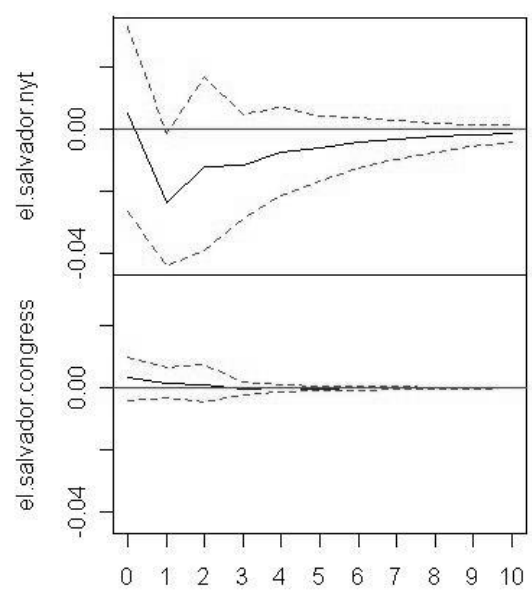
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.speech



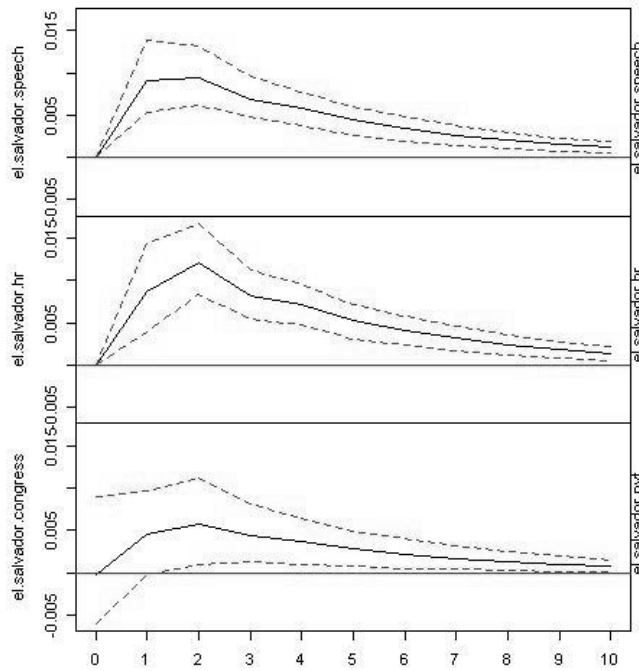
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.hr



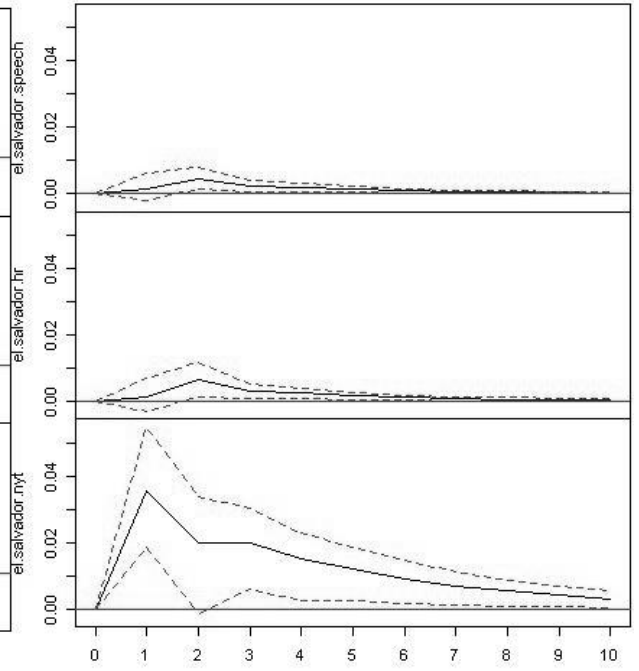
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.nyt



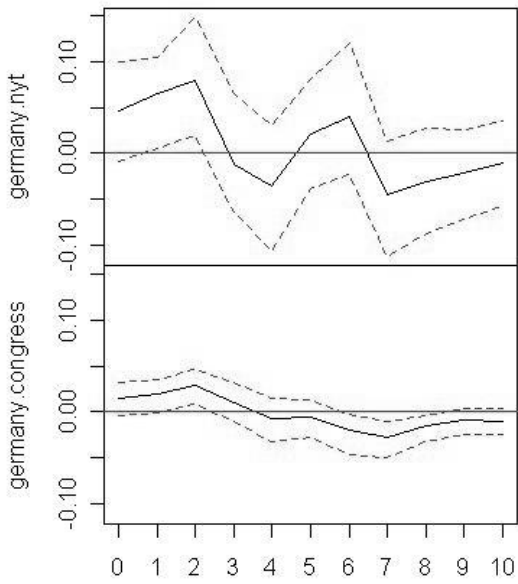
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from el.salvador.congress



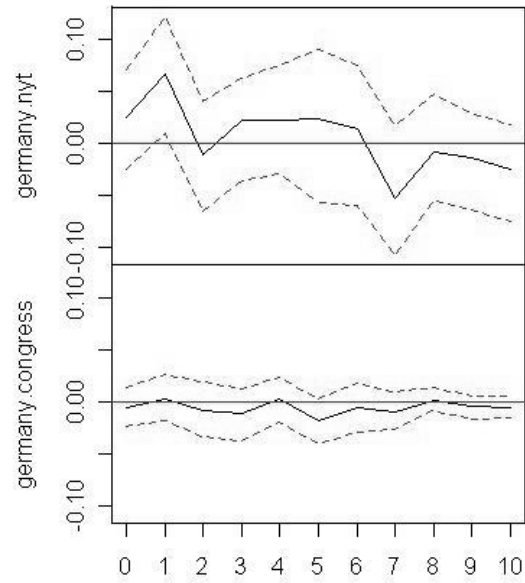
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.speech



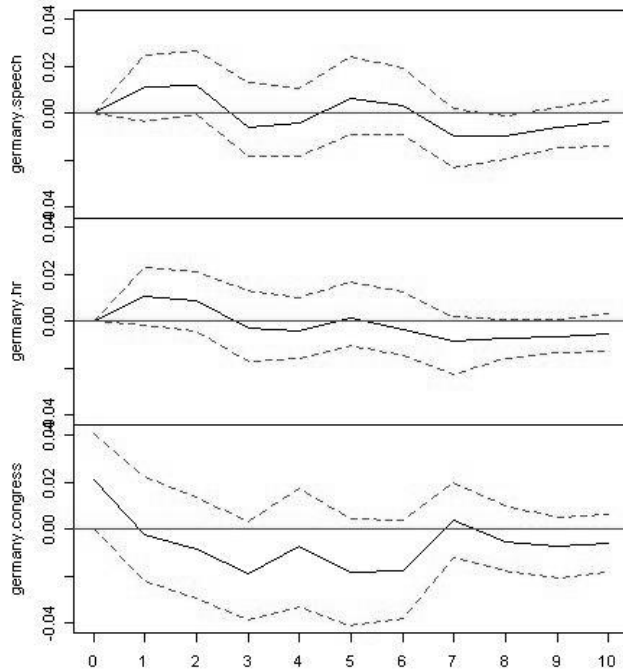
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.hr



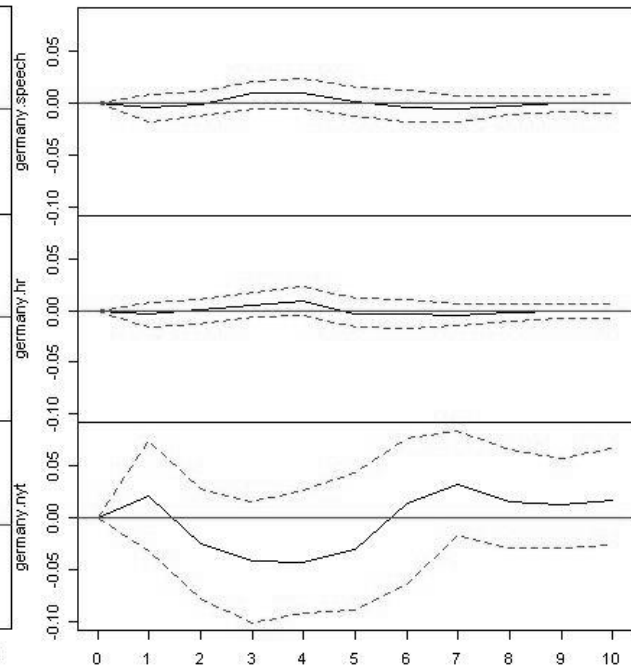
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

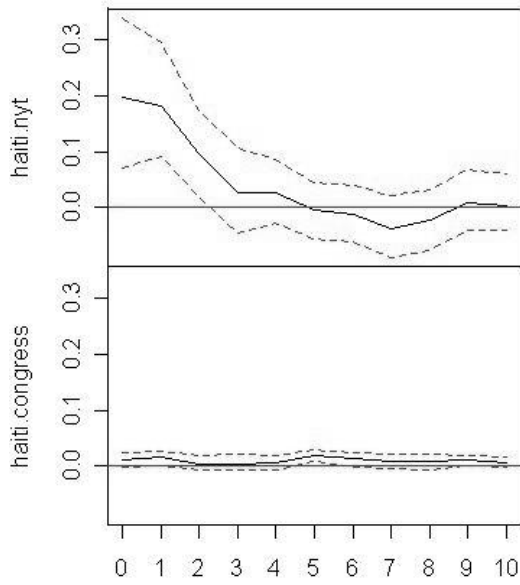
Orthogonal Impulse Response from germany.congress



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

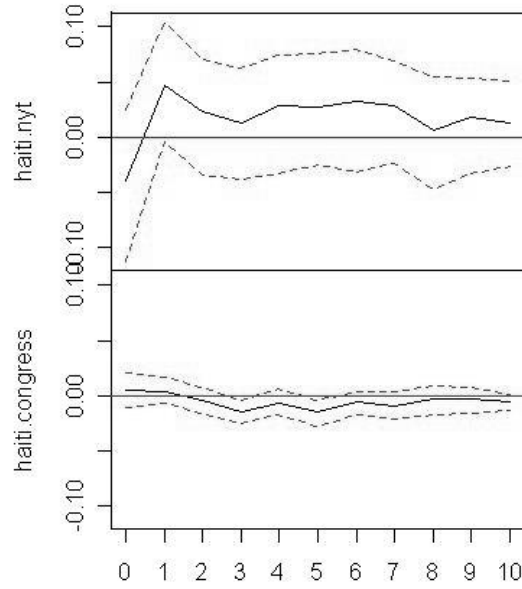


Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.speech



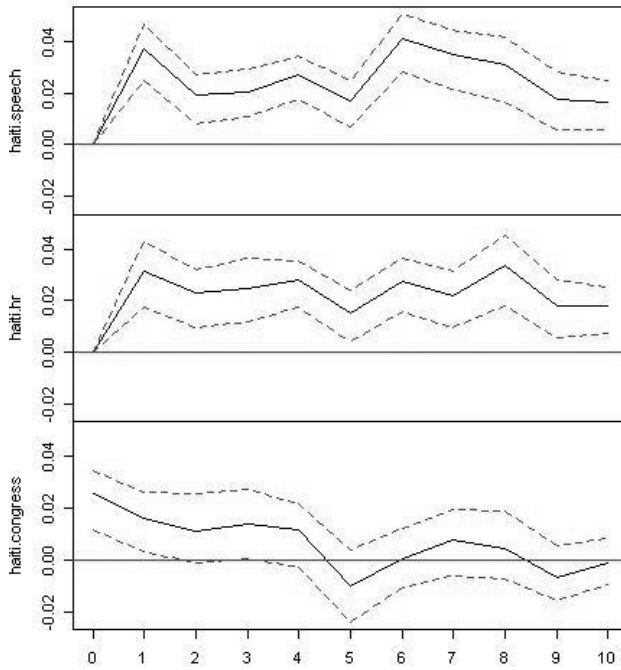
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.hr



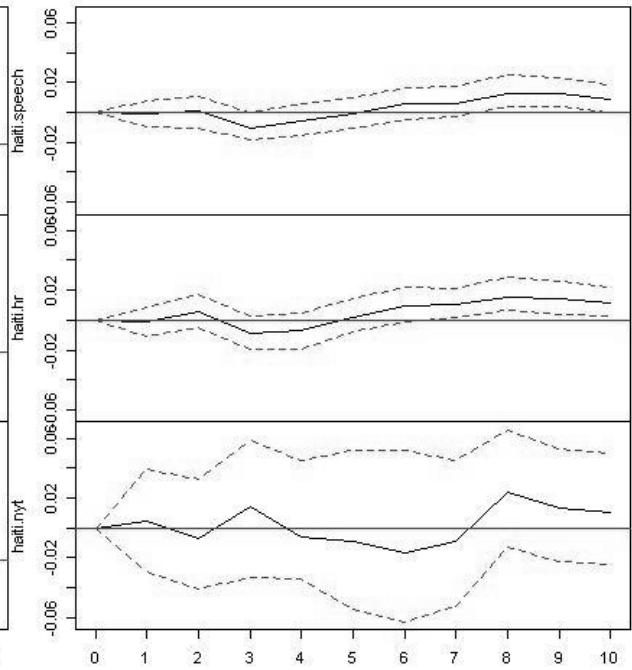
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.nyt



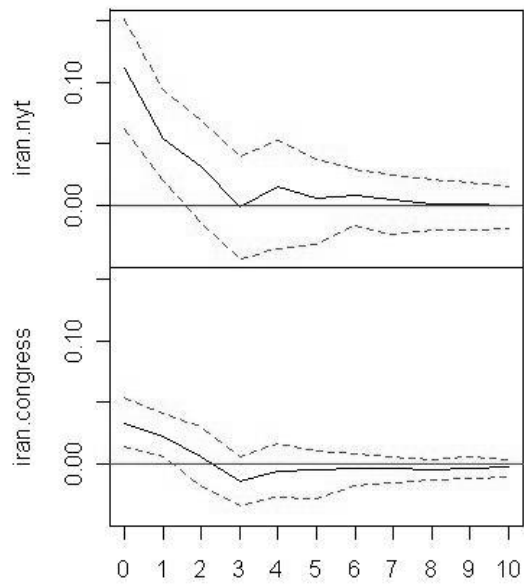
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from haiti.congress



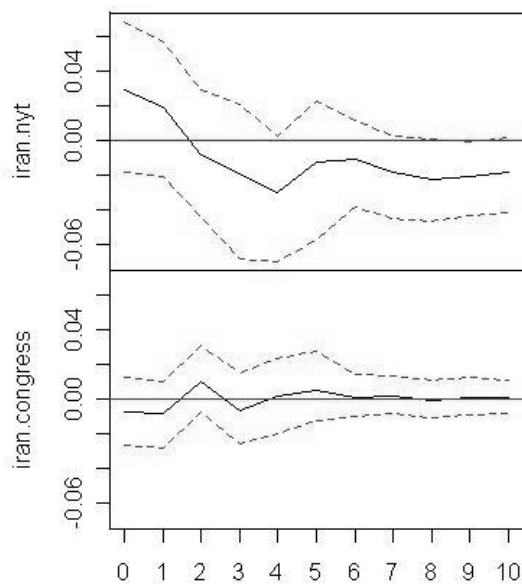
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.speech



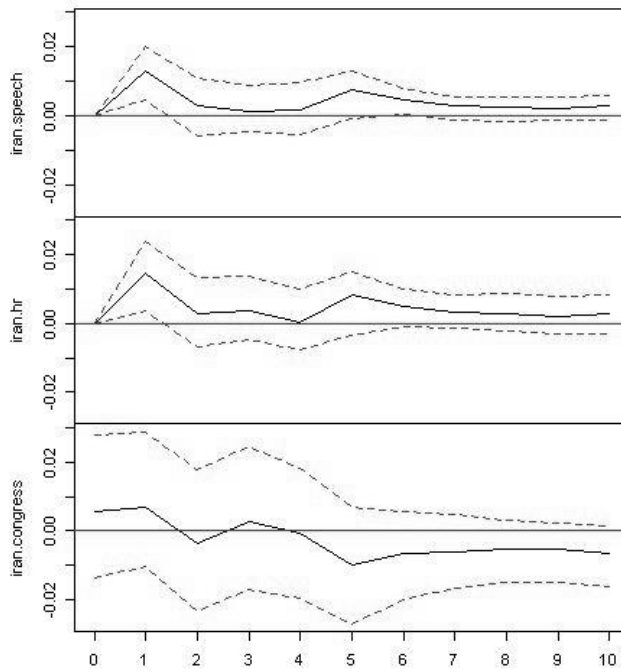
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.hr



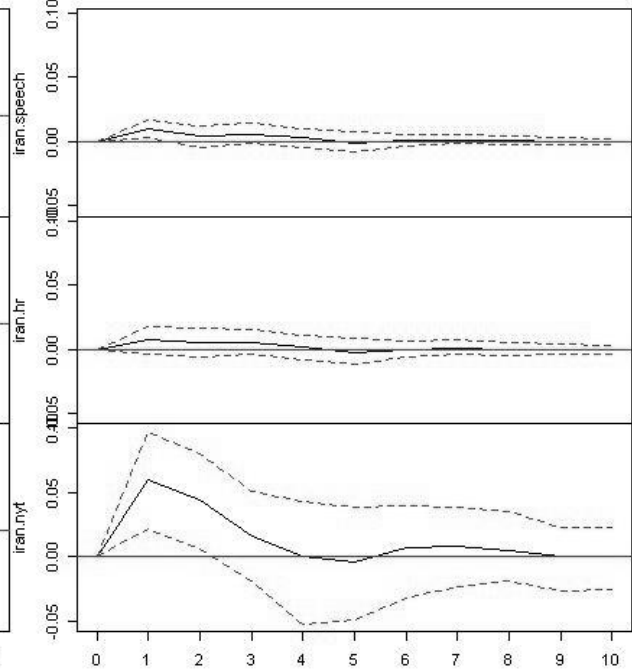
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.nyt



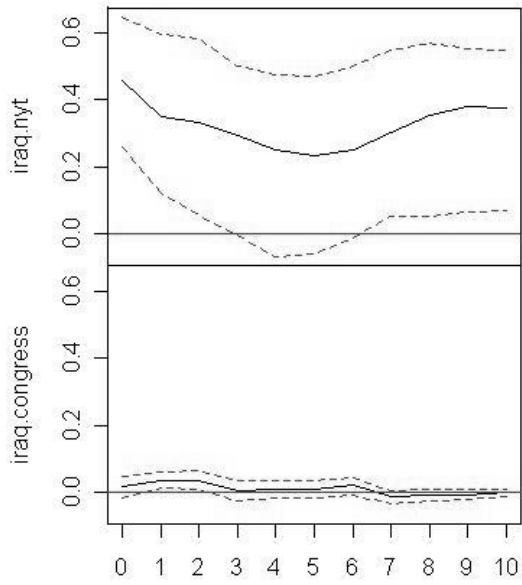
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iran.congress



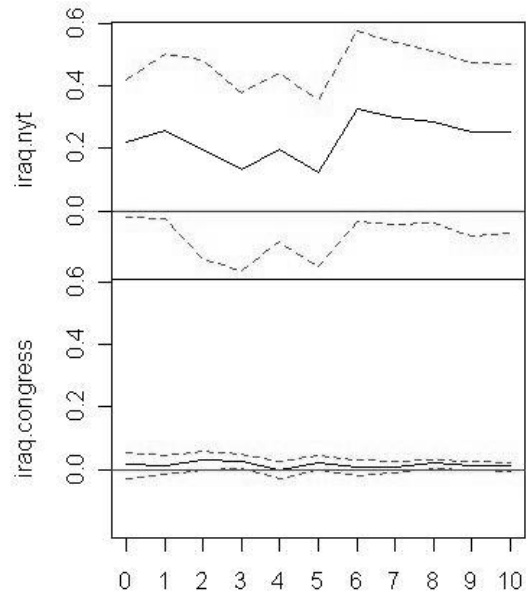
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.speech



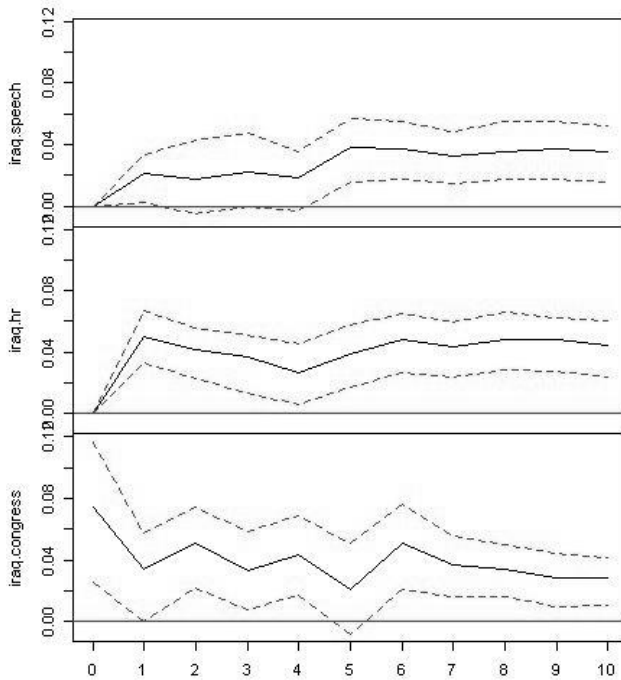
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.hr



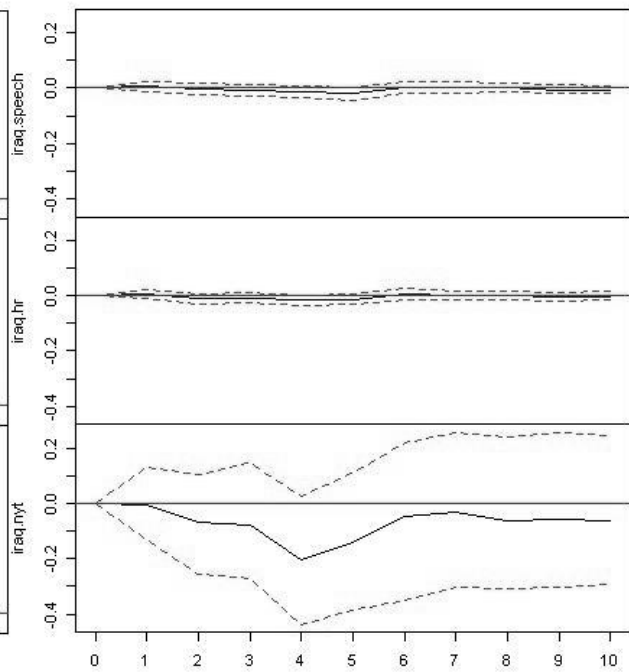
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.nyf



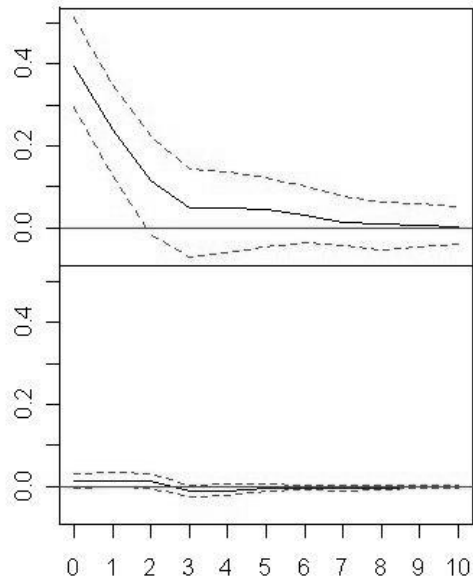
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from iraq.congress



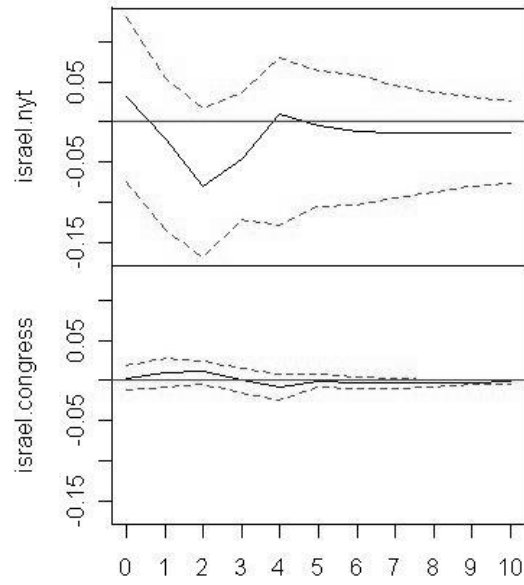
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.speech



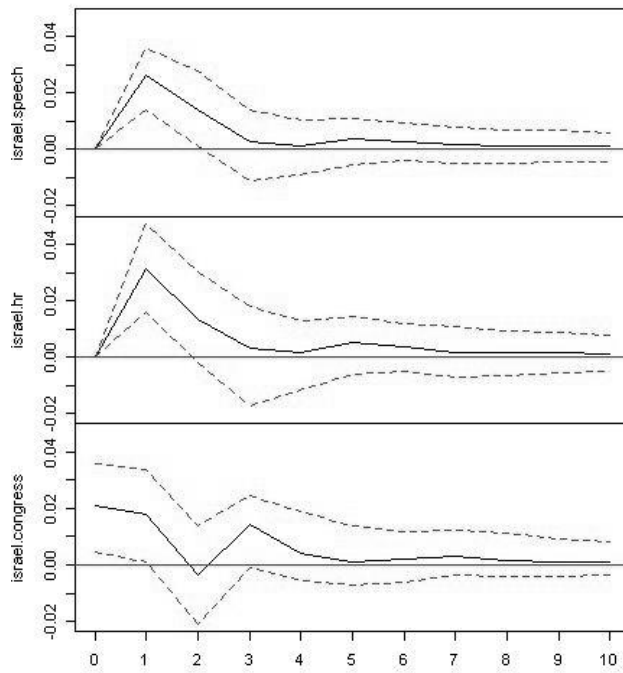
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.hr



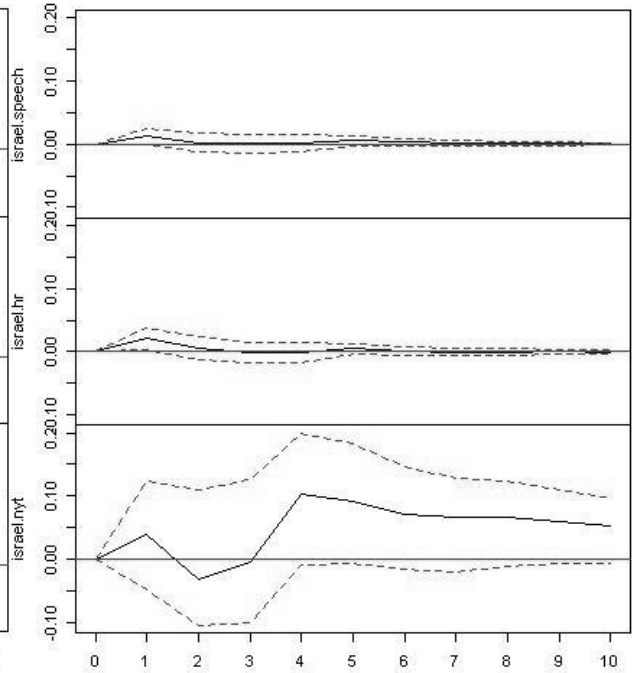
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.nyt



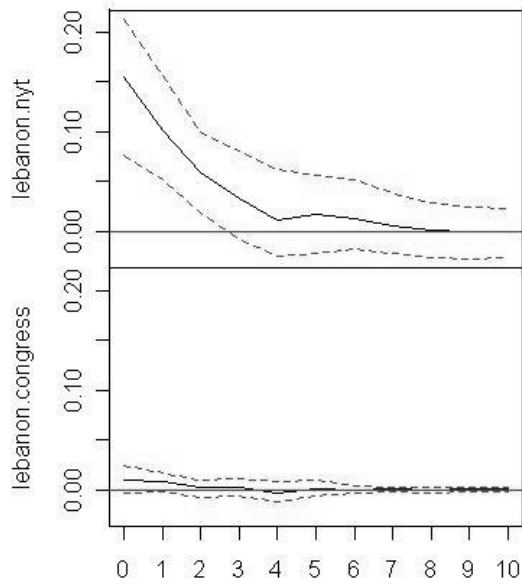
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from israel.congress



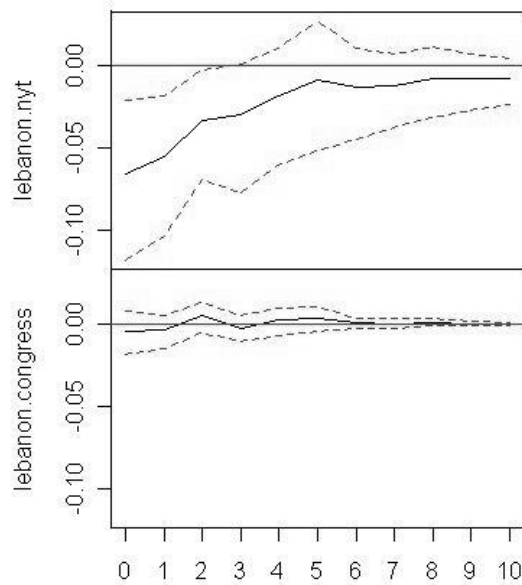
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.speech



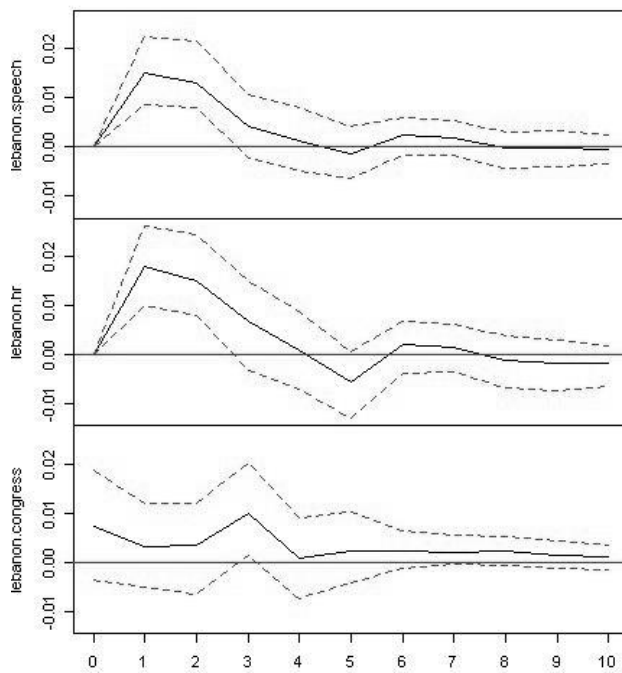
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.hr



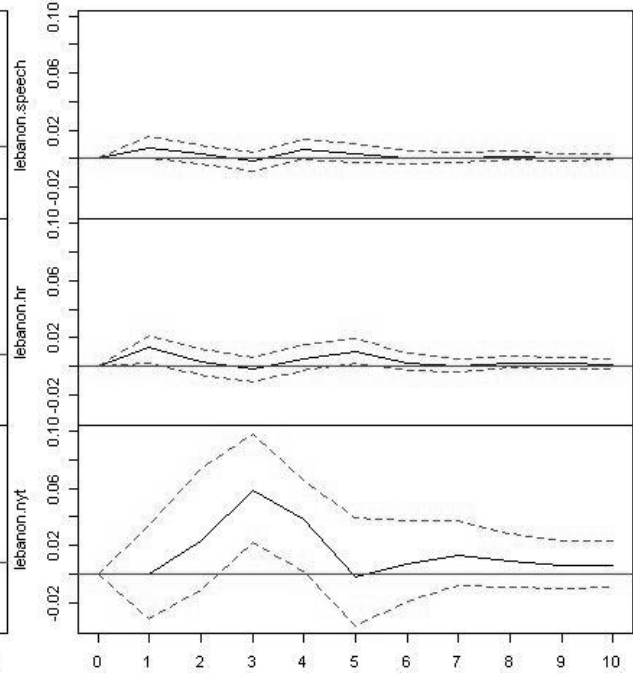
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

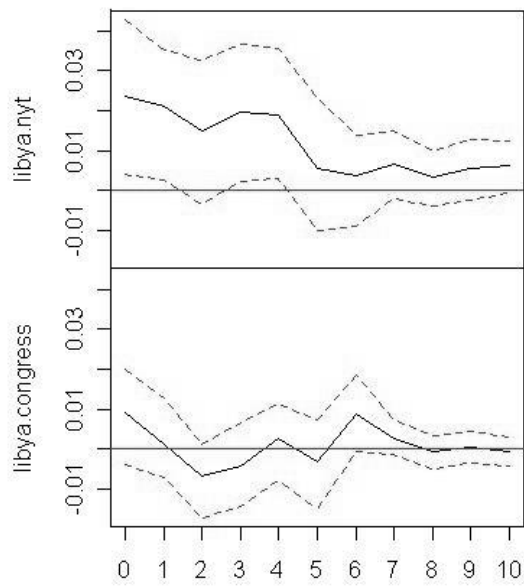
Orthogonal Impulse Response from lebanon.congress



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

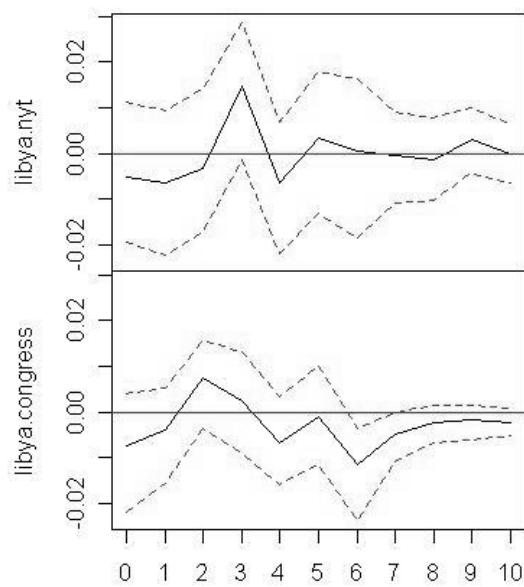


Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.speech



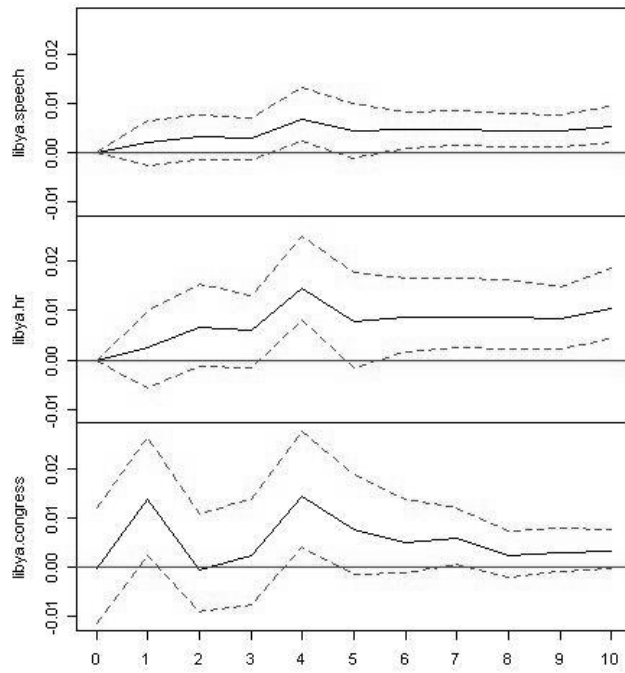
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.hr



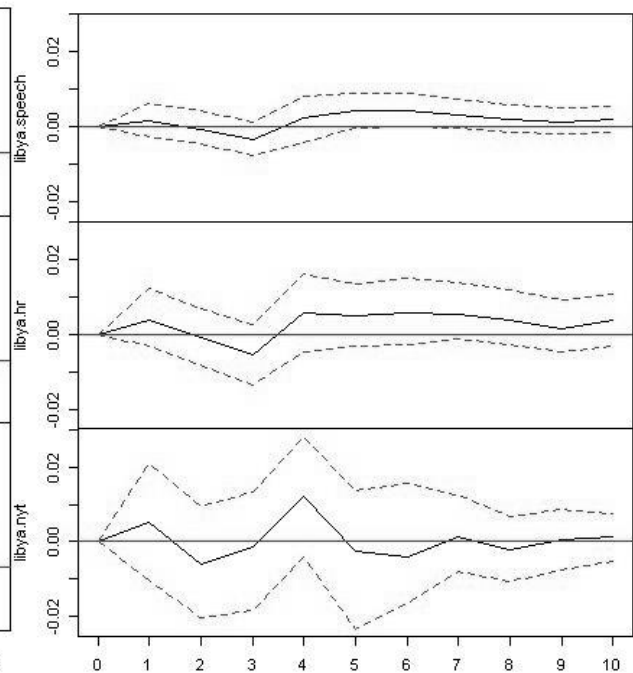
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

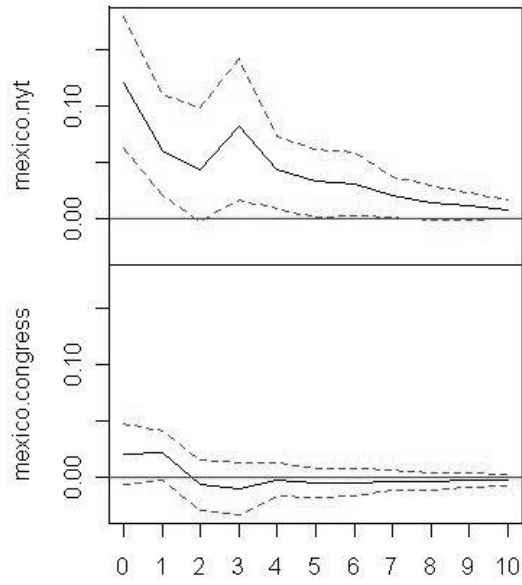
Orthogonal Impulse Response from libya.congress



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

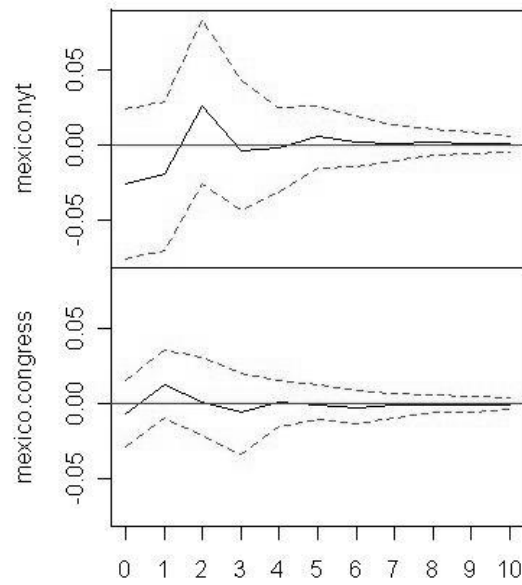


Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.speech



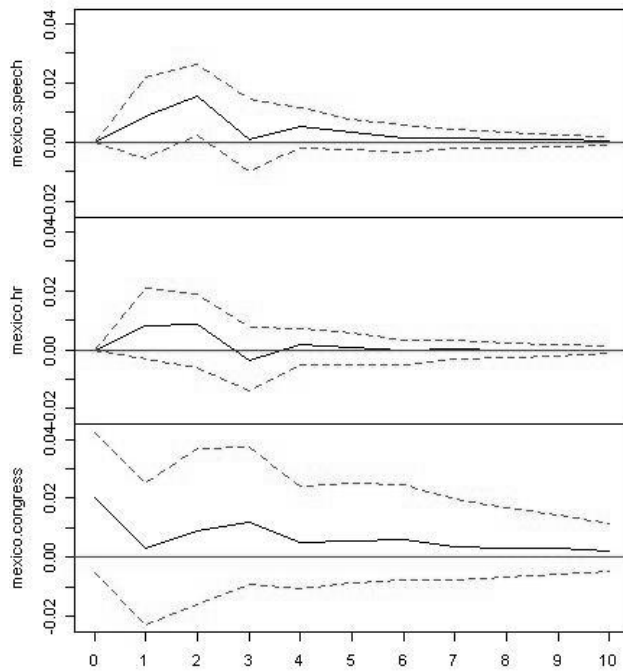
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.hr



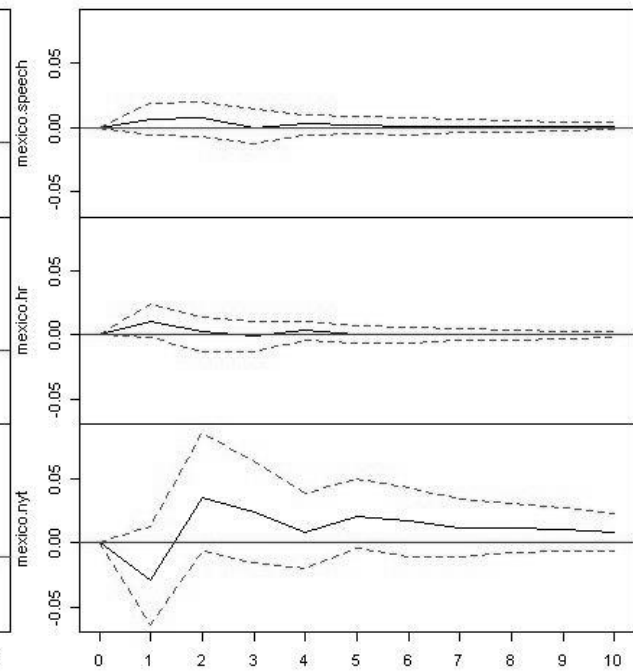
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.nyf



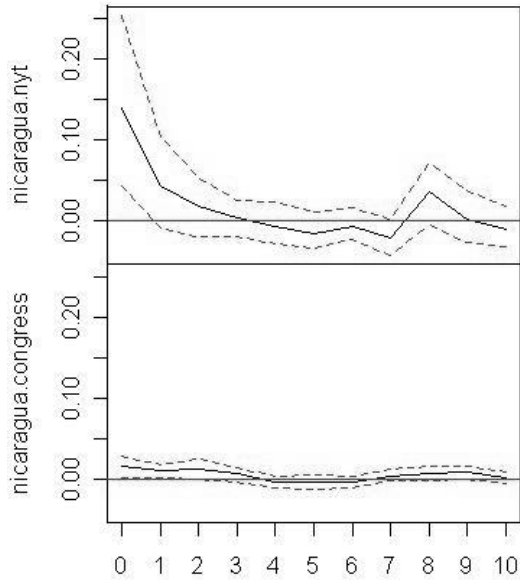
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from mexico.congress



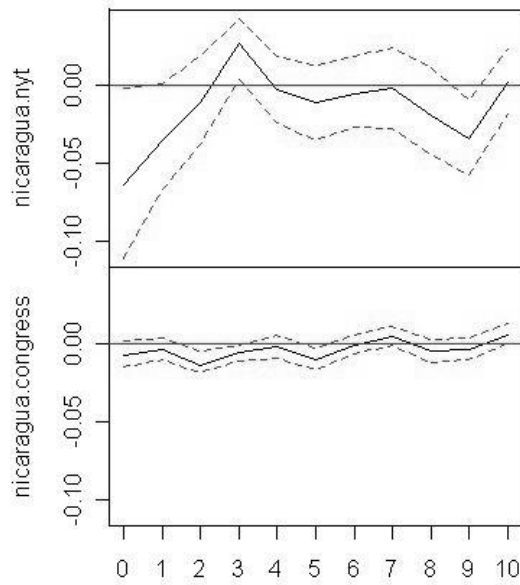
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.speech



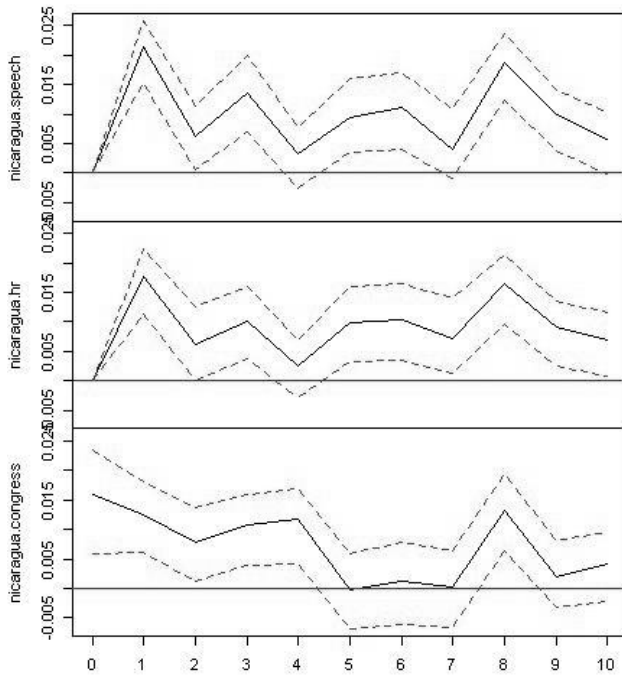
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.hr



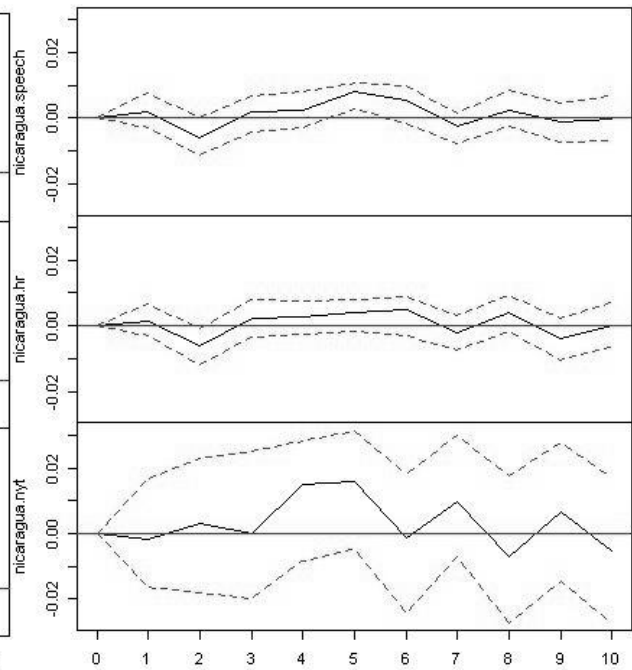
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.nyf



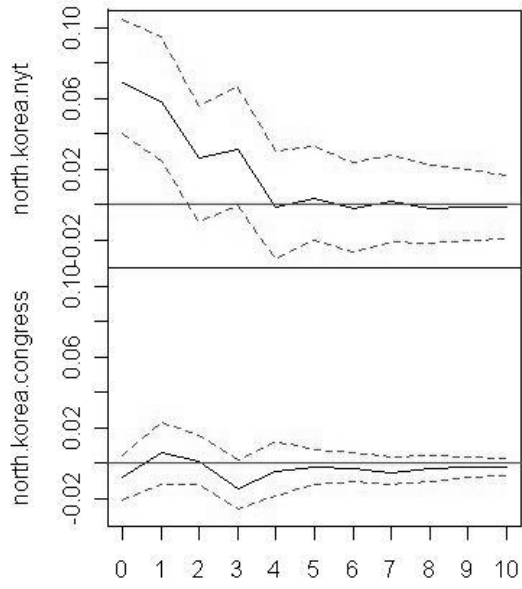
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from nicaragua.congress



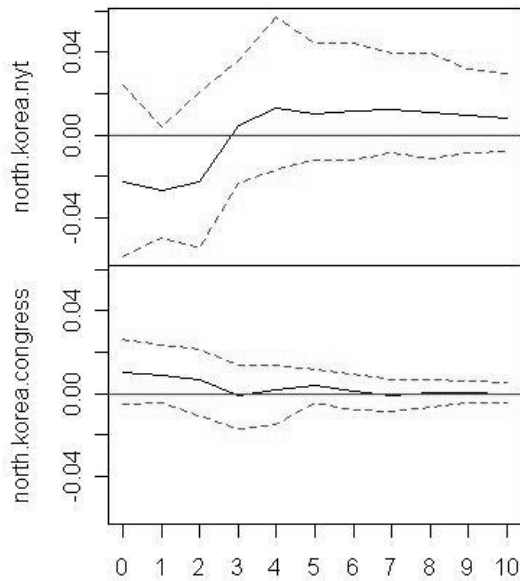
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.speech



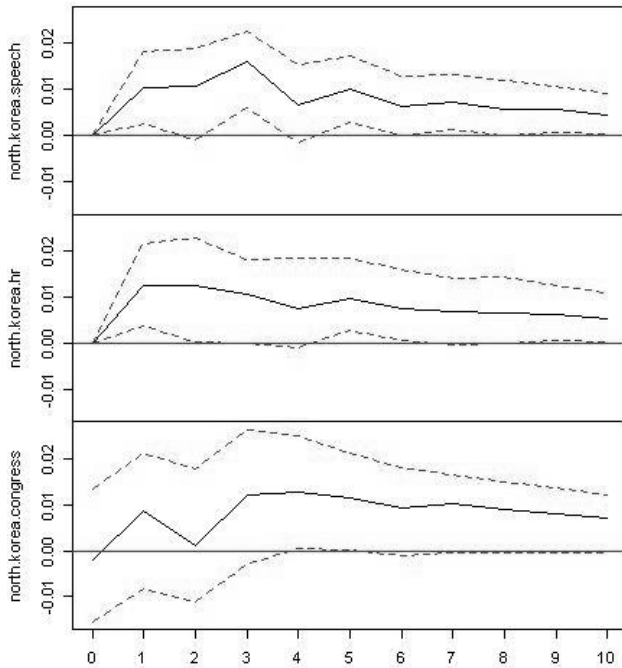
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.hr



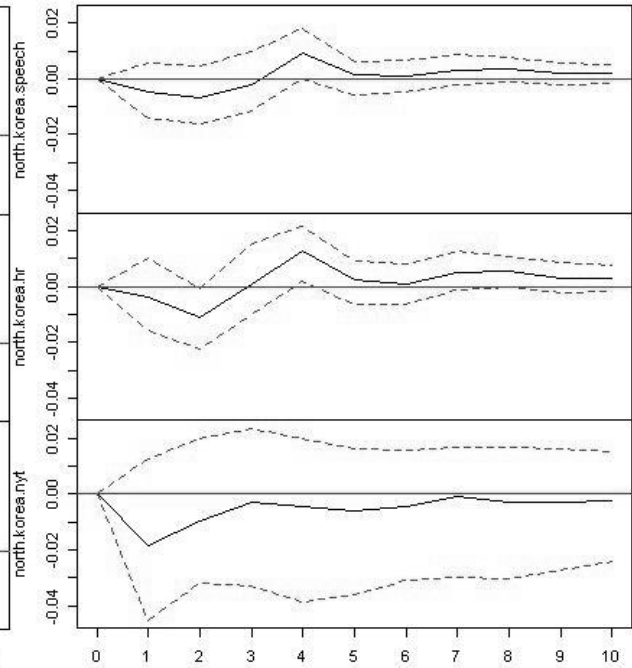
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.nytimes



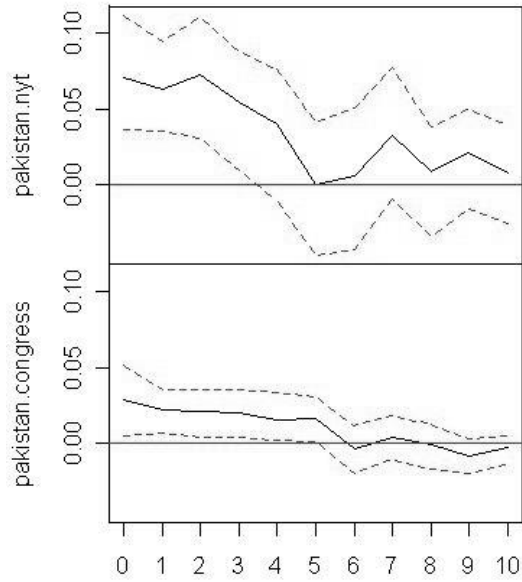
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from north.korea.congress



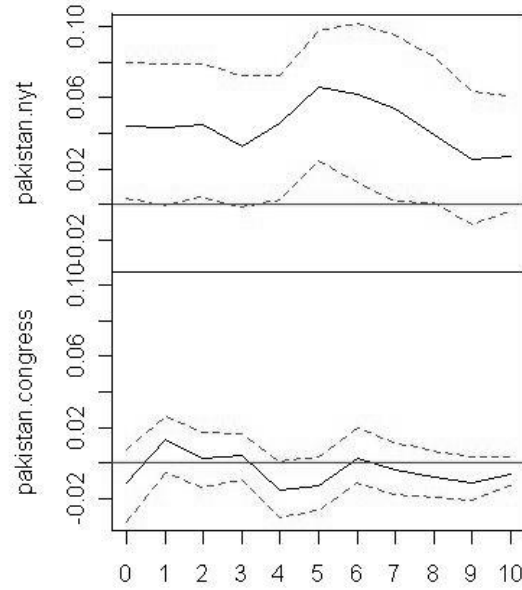
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.speech



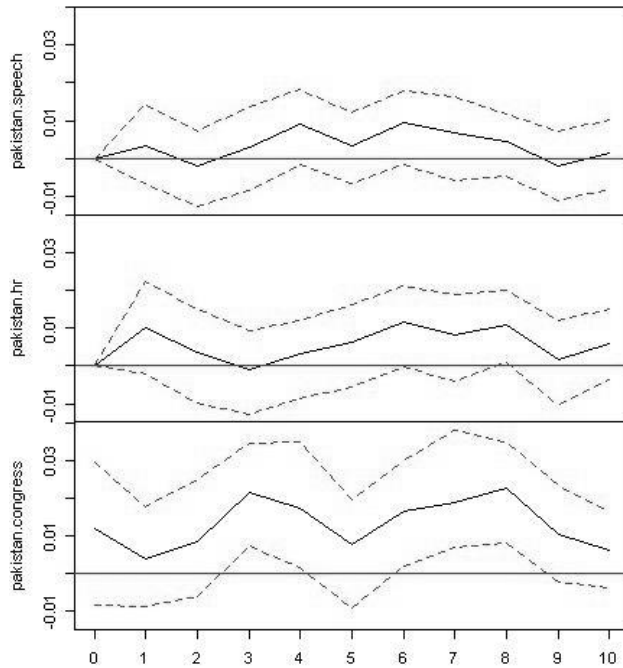
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.hr



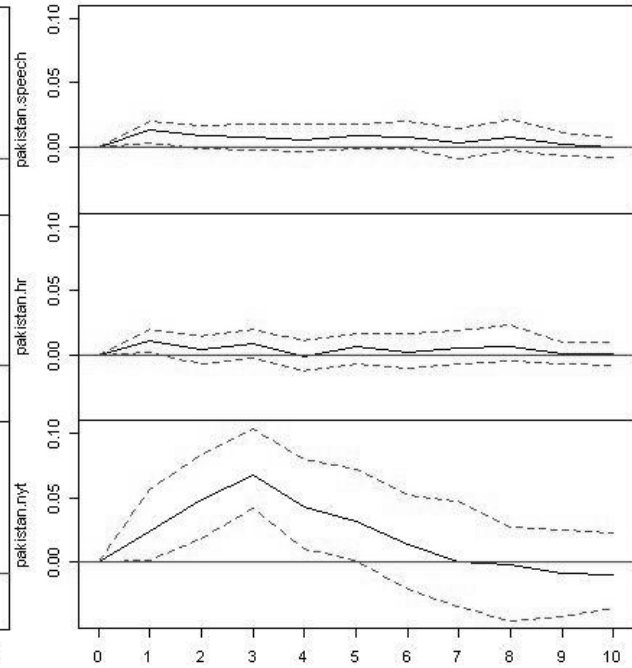
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.nyt



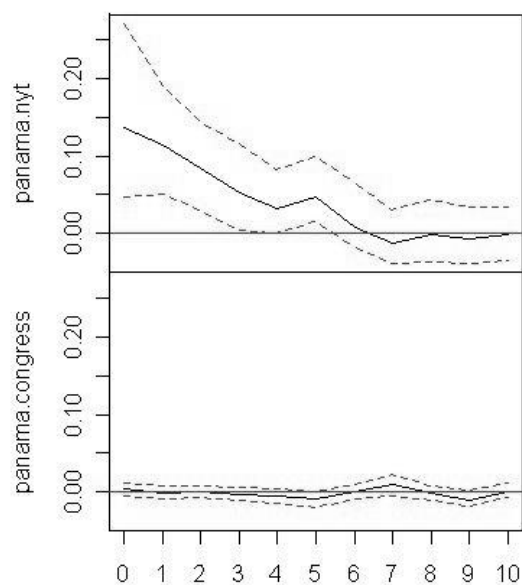
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from pakistan.congress



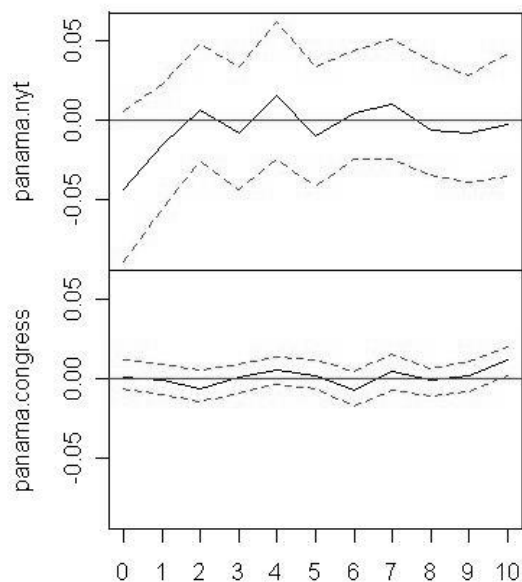
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.speech



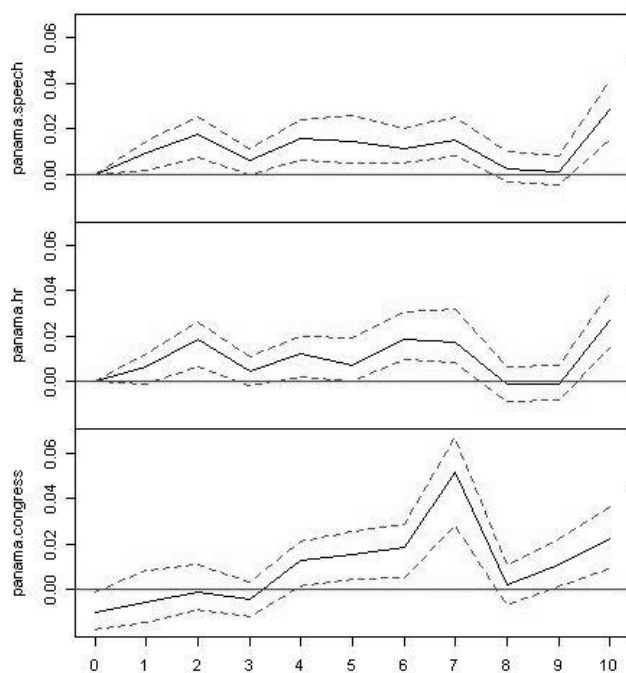
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.hr



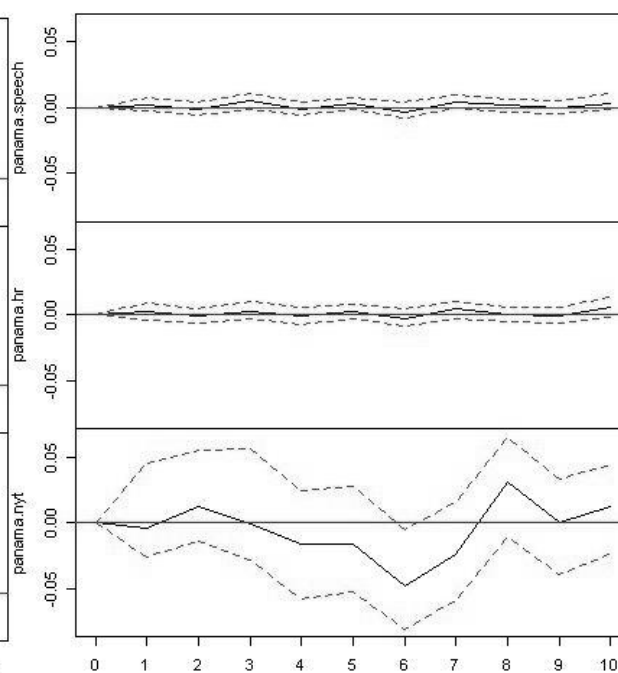
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.nyf



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

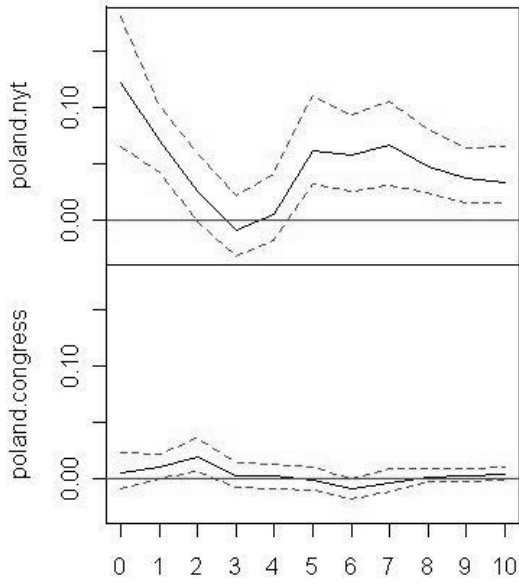
Orthogonal Impulse Response from panama.congress



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

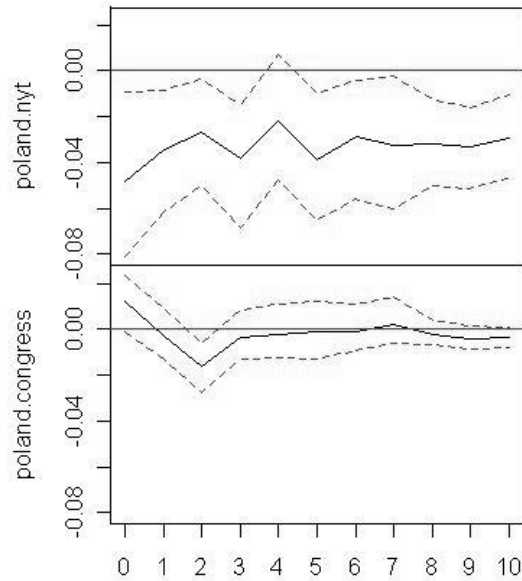


Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.speech



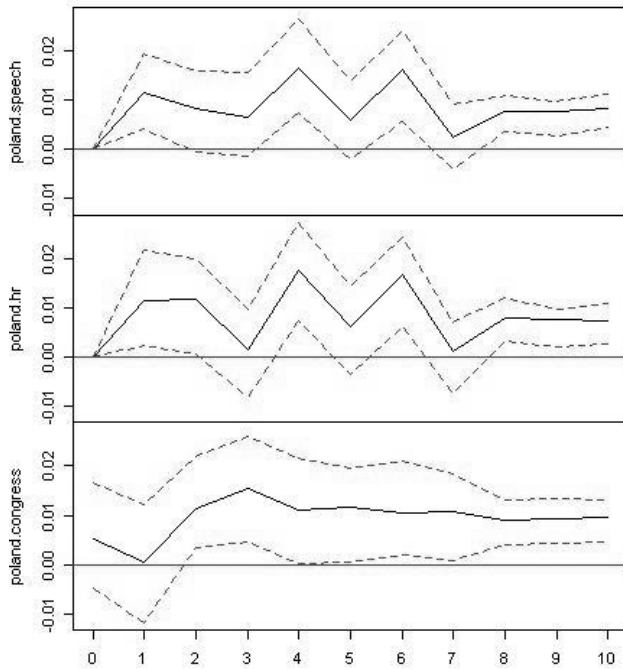
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.hr



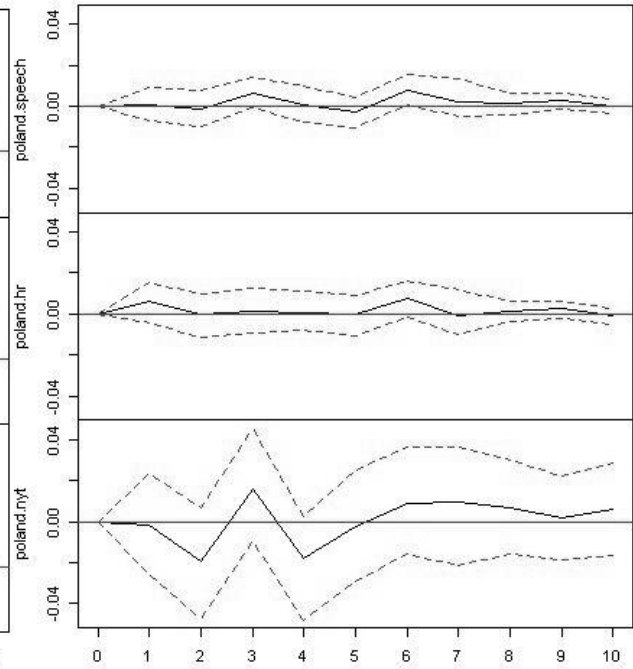
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

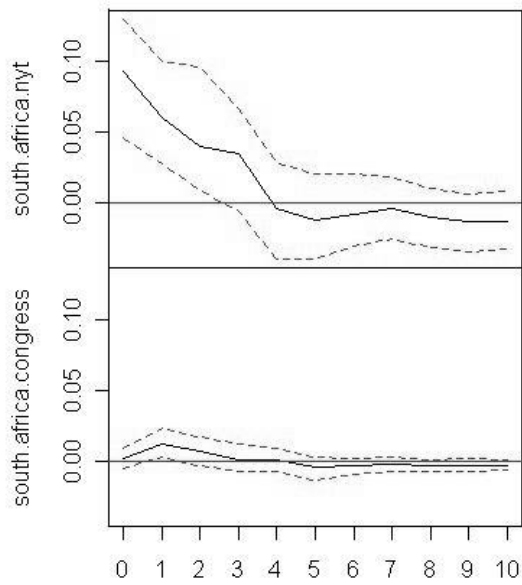
Orthogonal Impulse Response from poland.congress



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

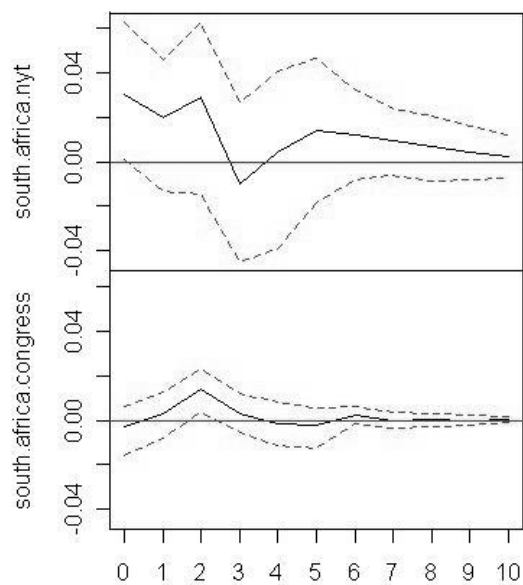


Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.speech



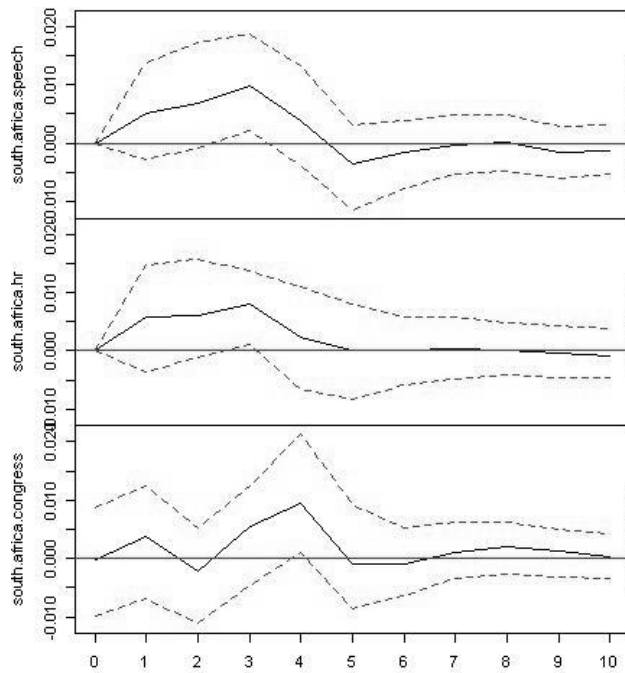
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.hr



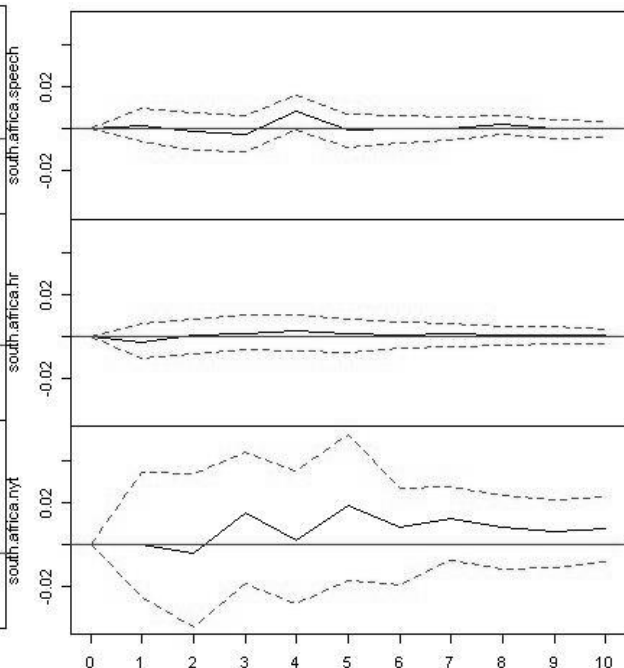
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.nytimes



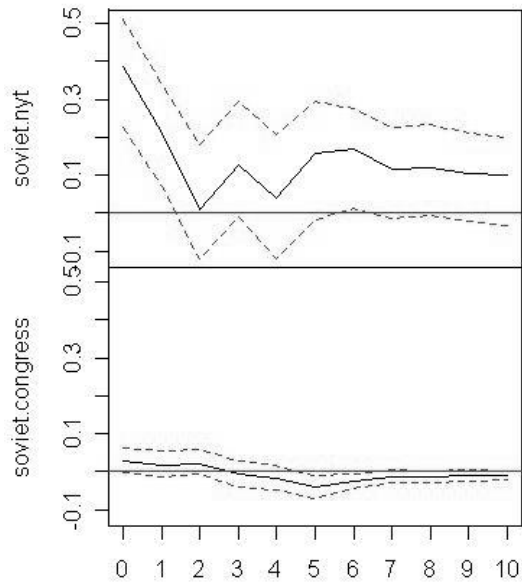
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from south.africa.congress



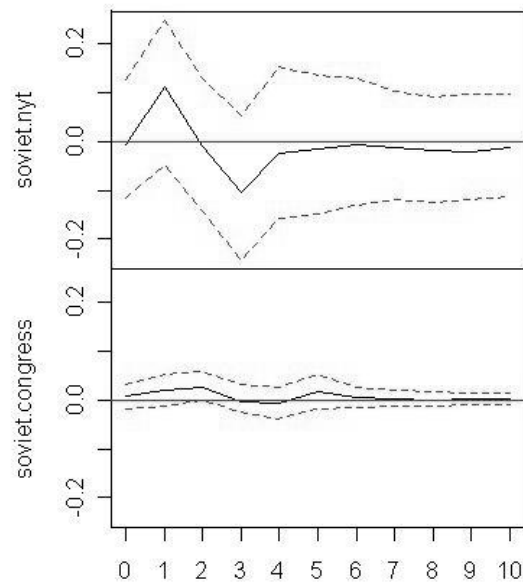
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.speech



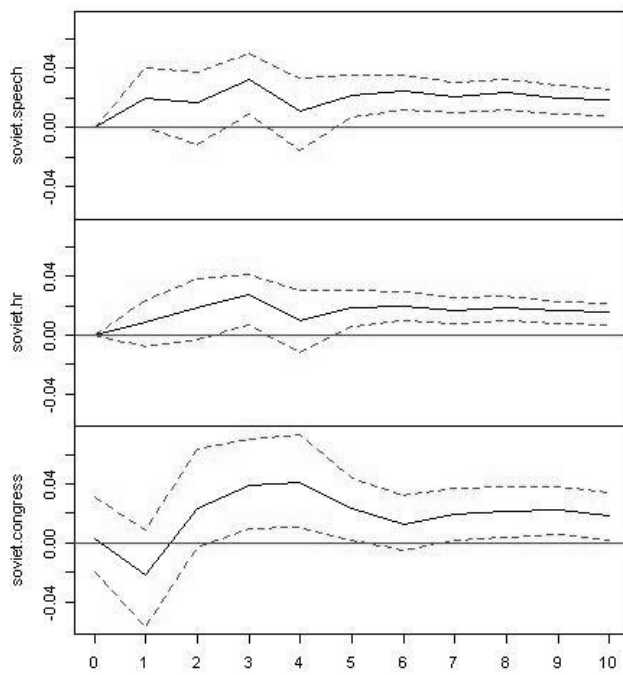
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.hr



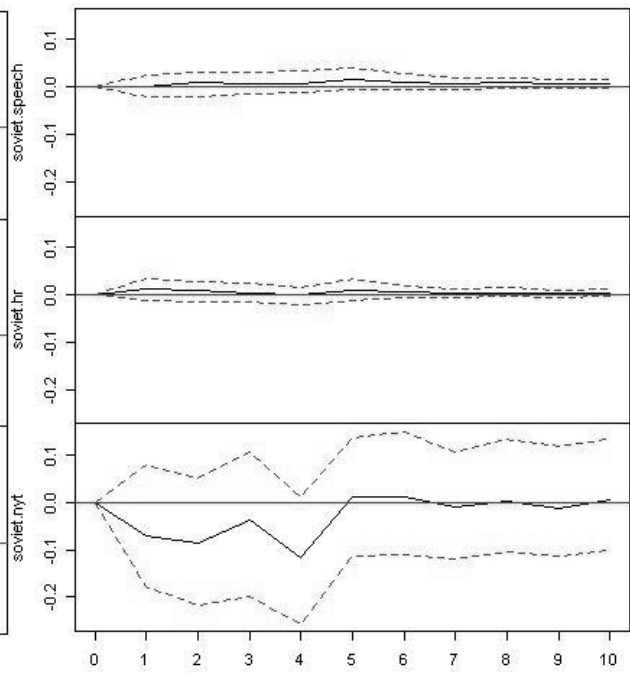
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.nyf



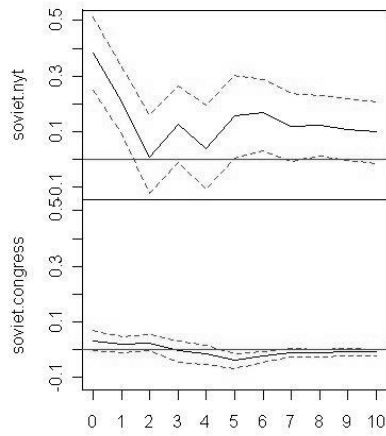
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.congress



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

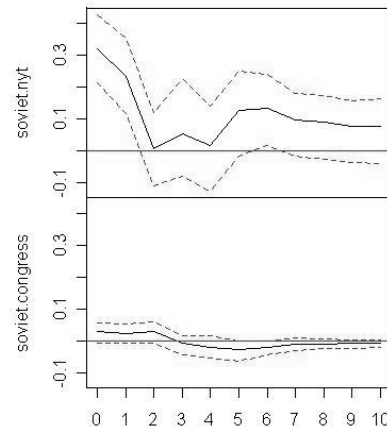
Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.speech



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

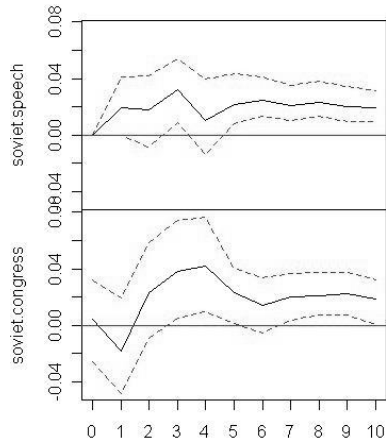
Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.nyf

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.hr

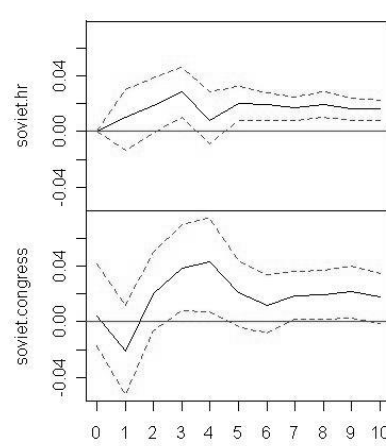


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.nyf

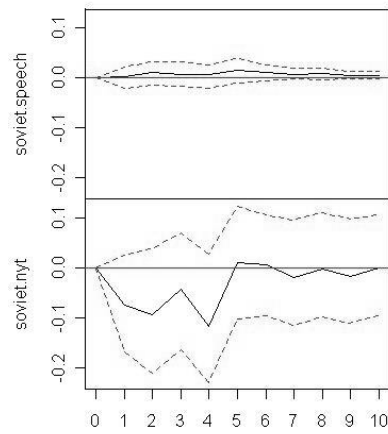


95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs



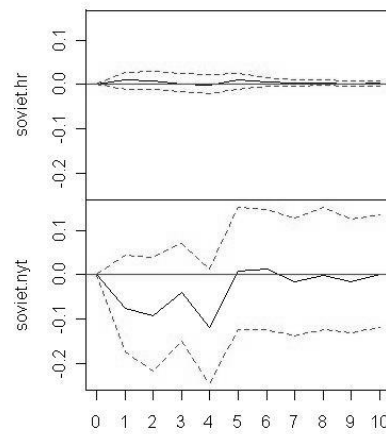
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.congress



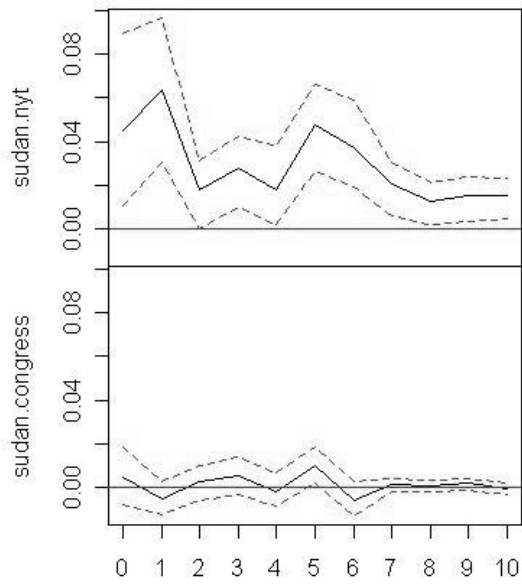
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from soviet.congress



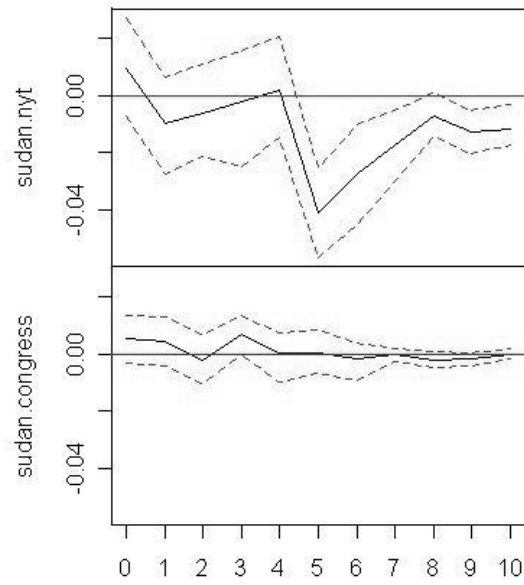
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.speech



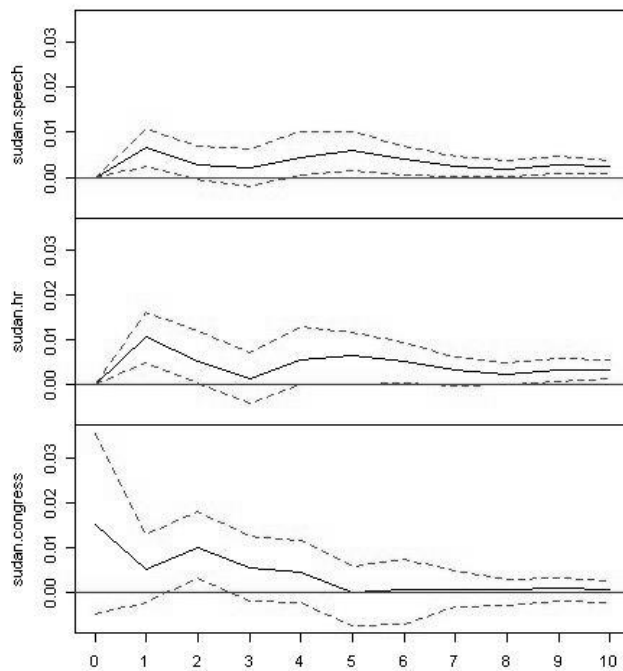
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.hr



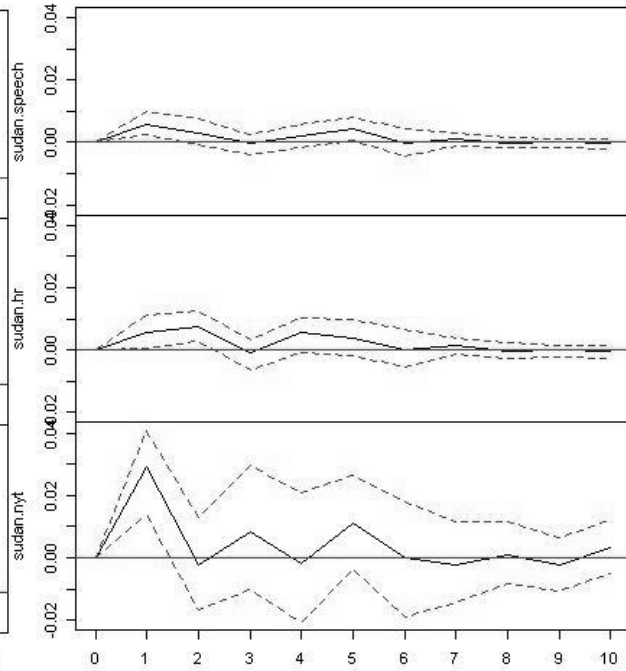
95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.nyt



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

Orthogonal Impulse Response from sudan.congress



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs