Values In Text: Applied Paper

Working Title: From Give me Your Tired, Your Poor to Build the Wall; Value-Based Issue Ownership in the North American Immigration Debate

Abstract: DRAFT

For submission on or before 31 August 2018 to BIGSSS-CSS Special Issue submission

Authors: Amos, Ardag, Hajdinjak, Morris (Alphabetically—actual ordering still to be discussed)[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Background/Motivation:** Political actors have established track records of political issue ownership in many areas of the public discourse. Previous findings suggest that issue-ownership is related to policy priorities of established political actors (Budge & Farlie, 1983; Petrocik, 1996) as well as the saliency (Geys, 2012; Meguid, 2005, 2008) of the issue. [Saliency might be a good connection for the migration topic, therefore the use of the second dictionary.] Building upon this literature we propose a new ‘value-based issue ownership’ approach whereby we show that parties have commanding control over the value-laden discussion surrounding an issue. [Maybe a few words on why expanding the literature with such an approach is noteworthy.] We choose the migration topic as a salient issue based on which we demonstrate the relevance of the value-based issue ownership and show how the value-based issue ownership shifts over time.

**Methods:** To measure the use of values in political discourse, we utilize parliamentary speeches of the lower houses of Canadian and United States’ [what happened to the other countries?] national legislatures and process them through the Migration dictionary (citation needed here) (Ruedin & Morales, 2017) to obtain a set of topic-relevant speeches. Subsequently, we use thenewly released Values in Text dictionary (under development) to obtain a frequency count of value-laden words per speech. We aggregate these scores at the speech, month, and yearly level to demonstrate the values saliency as well as the trends of value ownership over time.

**Results:** Our findings reveal a clear shift in the value-ownership of the immigration debate in both the United States and Canada over the past 20 years. We show that the left wing, liberal narrative espousing the universalist and benevolent narratives of granting asylum and welcoming refugees noticeably shifted in the United States’, and to a lesser degree Canada’s, discourse to that of a security focused narrative of safety from others, and the dangers associated with new and different peoples entering society.[Where did these findings come from? They don’t sound very exciting or unexpected so we might need a better frame to sell this.]

**Significance:** [Some solid argument to sell the importance of the discoveries.]

Budge, I., & Farlie, D. (1983). *Explaining and Predicting Elections: Issue Effects and Party Strategies in Twenty-three Democracies*: Allen & Unwin.

Geys, B. (2012). Success and failure in electoral competition: Selective issue emphasis under incomplete issue ownership. *Electoral Studies, 31*(2), 406-412. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2012.01.005

Meguid, B. M. (2005). Competition between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success. *The American Political Science Review, 99*(3), 347-359.

Meguid, B. M. (2008). *Party Competition between Unequals: Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe*: Cambridge University Press.

Petrocik, J. R. (1996). Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study. *American Journal of Political Science, 40*(3), 825-850. doi:10.2307/2111797

Here is a suggestion for an objective guideline for authorship order. We also need to discuss and figure out a good division of labor. And what was the citation manager software you were mentioning?

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1. See below [↑](#footnote-ref-1)