

**Anti-Immigrant Outrage Language in Anglo and Hispanic Media**

**Senior Honors Thesis**

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Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Introduction .....</b>	<b>p. 3</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Review and Evaluation of Scholarly Literature .....</b>	<b>p. 8</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Methodology and Content Analysis .....</b>	<b>p. 24</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Overall Findings and Implications .....</b>	<b>p. 66</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Conclusion .....</b>	<b>p. 74</b>
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>p. 78</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>p. 82</b>

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Anti-immigrant outrage language in the media dealing with Hispanics in the United States is an important topic that reveals the larger consequences of political punditry and the effects of various media sources on public discourse and policy as well as the difference in coverage of these issues between the English- and Spanish-language media. Professors Sarah Sobieraj and Jeffrey Berry define outrage language as a type of political incivility that is dramatic and aimed to, “provoke a visceral response from the audience, usually in the form of anger, fear, or moral righteousness through the use of overgeneralizations, sensationalism, misleading or patently inaccurate information, ad hominem attacks, and partial truths about opponents,” (Sobieraj, Berry, p. 2). Outrage language makes audiences have emotional rather than logic-based responses to issues.

This type of discourse is commonly seen within the infotainment industry, which frequently uses outrage tactics to boost ratings and increase profitability. “Infotainment” is a hybrid of news and entertainment in which entertainment programs include current-affairs content, or news-based shows that use entertainment principles such as giving titles to news segments, adding musical scores for theatrical effect, emphasizing drama and controversy, and focusing on political personalities and contests rather than substantive issues in order to attract larger audiences (Berry, Sobieraj). These types of programs frequently use outrage language in tandem with their infotainment tactics as they have strong economic incentives to attract larger audiences rather than being bound by the moral code of traditional journalism to broadcast hard facts and truths. Outrage language attracts larger audiences by creating artificial and exaggerated emotional stake in issues amongst readers, viewers, and listeners, that ties them to the subjective coverage of a particular slant on an issue, linked to a certain program, channel, show, or

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

commentator. While these tactics are mainly the same for both liberal and conservative media, the conservative media uses these sorts of tactics much more frequently than liberal media (Jamieson, Capella).

Because of its profitability, a great deal of money goes into the industry of infotainment, which has furthered the political and social polarization of our country (Sobieraj, Berry). Although the infotainment industry has played a role, politicians have also played a part in polarizing the country. They also use outrage tactics in order to elicit emotional rather than logical responses to political issues, particularly the issue of immigration, in order to remain relevant and incur support from constituencies that have been indoctrinated by the infotainment industry. I plan to look specifically at the effects of this industry and these individuals on the Hispanic population and how the English- and Spanish-language media portray these incidents differently.

Because the Hispanic population in the United States is growing so quickly, and rapidly becoming a larger part of the electorate, it is a very important group to watch. While many Hispanics receive their information from English-language media, there is somewhat of a language barrier or preference and part of the group receives their media from Spanish-language media. I want to see if the type of anti-immigrant rhetoric mainly promoted by the GOP and rebroadcast on these types of infotainment programs affect parts of the group differently based upon the type of media they choose to consume.

The Hispanic population is quickly growing from a minority to a majority in the United States and will eventually be a very important part of the voting electorate. Because of this, I think it's very important to look at how our political atmosphere is currently treating them. The Republican Party takes a much harder line on immigration issues and has been the main player in

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

this type of anti-immigrant, verging on racist rhetoric. It is important to look at whether or not a change will be made in how the GOP deals with attracting their votes because of the impending importance of the Hispanic group as part of the electorate or if the polarizing consequences of outrage language use will lock conservatives into a cycle of ever increasing extremism.

The main research question that I pursued through this research is: how does English-language and Spanish-language media typically cover the issue of immigrants and immigration, specifically dealing with Hispanics? In answering this question, I will also look at how the English- and Spanish-language media covers the discussion of immigration issues by political pundits, cable “news” show hosts, and other members of the infotainment industry. It will be interesting to see whether or not the Anglo and Hispanic media reproduces this type of outrage rhetoric that exists in the marketplace for further economic gain or whether the audiences have no interest in this type of information.

In order to study this issue, I conducted a content analysis of English- and Spanish-language newspapers dealing with anti-immigrant issues and outrage language surrounding these same issues. I looked at Anglo and Hispanic newspapers from three regions around the United States that discuss the outrage language used in the infotainment industry and political pundits at the national level. I will be using Professor Berry and Sobieraj’s coding scheme to define “outrage” using their 13 ways to define outrage in order to code the content on issues that are polarizing for Hispanics (i.e. immigration and the attitude towards immigrants).

For English-language media, I chose three major newspapers and then found their major Spanish-language counterparts from the same city. Each is a daily newspaper with a large audience, and archives are available online. I coded content from *The New York Times* and *El*

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

*Diario La Prensa NY* from New York City, NY; *The Los Angeles Times* and *La Opinion* from Los Angeles, CA; and *The Miami Herald* and *El Nuevo Herald* from Miami, FL.

In Chapter 2, I present a thorough literature analysis of the existing research on this topic. I answer the question ‘what is outrage language?’ and look at how previous scholars define and differentiate between ‘uncivil political rhetoric’ and ‘outrage language’. Professors Sobieraj and Berry have co-authored a significant amount of the current scholarly literature on outrage rhetoric, but other prominent scholars such as Jamieson and Capella, Mutz and Reeves, and Mayer discuss incivility in media and politics. I look at how outrage language affects politics and the differing opinions on whether or not the effects of outrage language matter. I then discuss the current status of the Hispanic population in the American political climate. Branton and Dunaway compiled a cohesive piece summarizing much of the prominent literature dealing with Hispanic Media available today.

In Chapter 3, I present my original research in the form of a content analysis. I studied three topics within the immigration issue: The Dream Act, the controversial Arizona immigration law SB 1070, and a comment made by a candidate Herman Cain in the 2012 Republican race for President about building a lethal electric fence on the Mexico-United States border. I describe my methodology as well as my findings.

In Chapter 4, I analyze the findings of my content analysis and discuss the potential implications. I analyze my data on outrage language and give ideas of why outrage rhetoric differs across different topics and stories. I compare my findings across the three topics and discuss how these results could potentially apply to the entire outrage rhetoric industry.

In Chapter 5, I summarize my findings and conclude. I discuss whether or not anti-immigrant rhetoric by the GOP is detrimental to their ability to attract the Hispanic vote and how

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

they are currently talking about immigrants and immigration. It is fairly obvious that the anti-immigrant rhetoric causes Hispanics to vote less frequently for the GOP, but the impact of the English- and Spanish-language media coverage of this rhetoric may potentially affect the groups within the Hispanic population differently. I also discuss how the growing Hispanic population affects the current political atmosphere. This gives implications as to how outrage rhetoric has the potential to affect the political atmosphere at a much deeper level than it already does because of the increase in population of this group. I also explore how the GOP will change their strategy in talking about Hispanics in order to avoid this. I also discuss future research in this area.

## **Chapter 2: Review and Evaluation of Scholarly Literature**

### **Introduction**

Albeit the cliché statement that the United States is a melting pot, American citizens have been constantly suspicious of the hundreds of thousands of immigrants crossing the U.S. borders legally and illegally every year (Cisneros). Currently, there is a trend of politicians and the outrage industry using a great deal of anti-immigrant rhetoric. With the drastic increase in the Hispanic population in the United States and Latinos comprising 15 percent of the overall population, through both legal and illegal immigration, it is important to look at this type of language and the impact it has on our social and cultural environment, and on this growing demographic of our population (Stewart, Pitts, Osborne). The anti-immigrant rhetoric frequently targets the Hispanic community as a whole, portraying immigrants through a metaphoric representation to “concretize the social problem and connote particular solutions,” (Cisneros, p. 569). A majority of the individuals delivering these virulent anti-immigrant messages are either members of the GOP or associated with the Republican Party.

Political scientists should care about this issue because the Hispanic population in the United States is quickly growing and will soon become a very important part of the electorate (Felix, Gonzalez, Ramirez). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Hispanic population totaled 50.5 million people in 2010, making them the largest ethnic minority in the United States. Hispanics are also the fastest growing minority group, having increased in size by 43 percent between 2000 and 2010. The Census Bureau projects that the Hispanic Population in 2050 will total 132.8 million people, making up 30 percent of the nation’s population (“Hispanic Heritage Month”).



Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

The broader problem is not only how the anti-immigration message from the outrage industry and allied politicians is being received by rank-and-file Hispanics, but also how the rest of the citizens perceive immigration issues and the public policy decisions made based upon that anti-immigrant message (Cisneros). This paper looks at how English- and Spanish-language media discuss immigrants and related immigration issues.

The underlying logic in this hypothesis is that because Republican anti-immigrant rhetoric is received as racist in the Hispanic community, it will therefore be covered more in Spanish-language media. In turn, it makes Hispanic voters disinclined to vote for Republican candidates, no matter their efforts to positively target outreach toward Hispanic voters. The rapid growth of the Hispanic community and electorate in the United States makes them an important and powerful voting group.

### **Current State of Knowledge**

At present, there is not a great deal of comprehensive research on this topic. There is research on outrage language in the media, but not much deals directly with the Hispanic population. Most of the research I present here deals with the outrage industry as a whole rather than the Hispanic community within that context. I give background on incivility in politics, which frequently occurs in the media through negative campaigning, and how the mass media works in order to give context to the issue. The existing research on outrage language in the media can be divided into three areas: trends over time, potential causes, and implications. Major findings for each area are reviewed here.

### **Researching Incivility in Media**

Previously, the majority of research on incivility and negativity in American politics has been conducted in order to understand its effects and consequences. According to Professors

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

Sarah Sobieraj and Jeffrey Berry, the studies have attempted to attain, “a more comprehensive understanding of the extent and texture of political incivility itself,” (Sobieraj, Berry p.2) but not much data has been found that says political discourse is actually uncivil. The majority of researchers’ purposes in their studies have been to measure, based upon campaign advertisements and candidate statements, the impact on voter turnout or faith in the government (Sobieraj, Berry, p.2). The hypotheses in these studies predicted that voter turnout and faith in the government decrease because of the increased incivility and negativity within American politics.

While most existing studies look at statements made by and advertisements sponsored by candidates or political parties and their affiliates, there has been very little research done to examine how political incivility exists within media coverage itself (Sobieraj, Berry). One outlying example is Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Joseph N. Capella’s *Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment* that looks solely at the conservative media rather than at the entire outrage industry (Jamieson, Capella).

As the investigation into political incivility continued, researchers expanded their investigation to include radio talk shows, political blogs, conflict-based cable news analysis and other growing media sources vital to a clear understanding of the effects of uncivil rhetoric (Sobieraj, Berry, p. 2). As technology grows ever more common in households, audiences increase, making this issue more pertinent than ever. Personal computers, high-speed Internet, and car satellite radios have caused a marked increase in listeners due to increased ease of accessibility. With an overall increase in listeners, the outrage programs also experienced significant audience gains. Because of an increase in followers, the radical voices of talk show hosts and bloggers have a much wider reach and impact, making it a pertinent issue.

### **Defining “Outrage” Language**

Berry and Sobieraj discuss how incivility escalates to a more dramatic type of rhetoric that they termed “outrage”, especially in spaces such as blogs, talk radio, and cable news (Sobieraj, Berry, p.2). Their definition of “outrage” is, “a particular form of political discourse involving efforts to provoke a visceral response from the audience, usually in the form of anger, fear, or moral righteousness,” (Sobieraj, Berry, p.1). The examples of tactics used in the outrage industry are, “overgeneralizations, sensationalism, misleading or patently inaccurate information, ad hominem attacks, and partial truths about opponents,” (Sobieraj, Berry, p. 3). Berry and Sobieraj identify the difference between incivility and outrage as a level of severity and intensity. Mutz and Reeves (2005) define incivility as, “gratuitous asides that show a lack of respect and/or frustration with the opposition,” (Mutz and Reeves). It is important to note that while all outrage language is uncivil, not all incivility can be categorized as outrage. In outrage language, there is a distinct purpose to provoke emotion, whereas incivility could be a more simplistic act such as eye-rolling or sighing, which does not incorporate “malfeasant inaccuracy or intent to diminish” (Sobieraj, Berry, p.3).

This is the type of language I would like to explore when targeted at the Hispanic community, to see how it affects them across the language barrier.

### **The History of the Political Atmosphere through Language**

Many studies have found that although outrage language is prevalent within both the Democratic and Republican Parties, the conservative media uses more outrage speech than the liberal media (Sobieraj, Berry, p.1). Although the tools and tactics of outrage speech are largely the same for both sides of the media, the structure of conservative media institutions is better suited to utilize and promote uncivil rhetoric. This along with the political view of the party may

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

be why the anti-immigrant rhetoric from the GOP seems much more intensely focused upon attacking Hispanics than is Democratic rhetoric.

Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Joseph N. Cappella discuss the influential powers of major conservative media outlets in their book *Echo Chamber*. They write that the mission of these establishments, specifically the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page and Fox News Channel, is to defend and reinforce conservative ideals already shared by the majority of the readership. Commentator Jeff Jacoby writes that this structure ensures that “ideologically reassuring information is disseminated to the faithful,” which strengthens ties to the Republican Party (Jacoby). In a study performed by Professors Jeffrey Berry and Sarah Sobieraj in the spring of 2009, the findings show that the right engages in more types and instances of outrage than does the left (Sobieraj, Berry, p. 22). This may very well be aided by the structure of the conservative media and helps disseminate the anti-Hispanic messages to the mass public.

### **Negative Campaigning as Incivility in Media**

Within the current research on incivility in media, the most commonly recognized form of negative rhetoric is slanderous campaigning, indicative of the public’s perception of a rise in the practice of using this type of language. Although the public believes that negative campaign tactics are being used more frequently in current politics, there has always been an aspect of negativity within politics (Mayer). As long as campaigns have been occurring, there has been negative campaigning. When Grover Cleveland ran for his first term as President in 1884, people would come to his rallies and sing, “Ma-Ma, where’s my Pa? He’s going to the White House, ha ha ha,” in order to point out the fact that he had two illegitimate children (Brodsky). Although negative campaigning has existed for decades within the electoral system, the expansion of mass media and new technologies has facilitated the spread of such messages to a greater proportion

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

of the population. Along this same point, advertisements can be much more potent with increased technology and demographic targeting, and are able to reach wider audiences (Mayer).

Studies have shown that negativity is more persuasive than praise, so it is seen as a useful and productive tactic in campaigns and politics in general. It is easier to get out a negative message than a positive one because negative messages require less information and positives require multiple links of logic to get the point across (Mayer). For example, Al Gore was heavily criticized for his statement that he created the Internet, because he attempted to simplify the story and to cut out some of the key steps in explaining the connection. While he did make a contribution, he clearly should not have claimed individual credit for the invention of the entire Internet (Blitzer). This mode of reasoning, along with others, may be in part why the GOP has so strongly posed a negative message about Hispanics as a whole.

Another reason why uncivil rhetoric is used in campaigns is because of the emotion-inducing aspect of negativity. Professors Berry and Sobieraj argue that, “Emotion can be politically productive, by heightening our attention to particular issues, candidates, and policies, as well as promoting political participation (Jamieson and Cappella 2008, Nadeau, Niemi, and Amato 1996),” (Sobieraj, Berry). Because of these reasons, it makes sense that negativity is used in some instances. Although negativity can be productive in reaching a certain outcome during an election, it must be balanced correctly in order to not throw society into a downward spin into full-blown political incivility. The anti-immigrant messages are teetering on the edge of racism and could easily be falling onto the dangerous side of this balance.

### **Understanding the Media**

Effective research on uncivil rhetoric necessitates a thorough understanding of American media institutions. Over the last 25 years, the media industries have consolidated ownership to a

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

few major media conglomerates (Bagdikian 2004) and decreased barriers for low-level entry.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the Fairness Doctrine of 1987 are two specific pieces of legislation that drastically changed the media (Sobieraj, Berry).

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was the pinnacle of the deregulation of American mass media, which caused a shift from local ownership to chain ownership to ownership by publicly traded companies (Sobieraj, Berry, 8). This consolidation of ownership has increased the emphasis placed upon profit margins, rather than public interest and information quality. The former limits placed upon ownership of national and local television, radio, and newspaper and broadcast ownership were relaxed. This led to concentrations of ownership within each media sphere, most drastically within the radio industry. For example, Clear Channel Communications owned 43 radio stations in 1995 and owned over 1,200 stations in 2010 (Sobieraj, Berry, 11). The relevance of this change should be noted, because the transition prompted by consolidation of ownership has reshaped the political content. Corporate overseers work by a market-model that has transformed news into a consumer-driven commodity, rather than a public interest model that values information depth and quality (Bennett).

With an increased emphasis on public interest and profit margins, the line between news and entertainment has become increasingly blurred (Sobieraj, Berry, 10). The term “infotainment” has been coined to mean many different things including entertainment focusing upon current-affairs issues or news-based programming that uses entertainment principles to draw audiences. Prime examples of the former are Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert, news anchors of Comedy Central, and examples of the latter are, “tilting news segments, adding musical scores to the news for theatrical effect, placing emphasis on drama and controversy, developing ‘reality TV frames’ and focusing on political personalities and contests above

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

substantive issues” (Berry Sobieraj, 10 from Bennett 2005a; 2005b; 2007, Patterson 1993). This trend has facilitated the rise of outrageous personalities in constant pursuit of popularity and followers.

Another legislative development that increased the uncivil nature of media was the elimination of the Fairness Doctrine in 1987. This law required media markets to produce, “equitable and balanced presentation of controversial public issues,” (Sobieraj, Berry, 9). Although the Doctrine did not require both sides to be heard within a single segment, networks were required to present opposing views through their programming. Without the Doctrine in place, media sources were able to become much more partisan. Currently, conservative talk radio programs have over ten times as many on-air minutes compared with progressive talk radio shows. In the Center for American Progress’ 2007 study of talk radio, researchers found that the theme of much more conservative than progressive within number of stations, number of hours, power of stations, and number of programs (Halpin et al 2007). Once the standard for having unbiased media was disregarded, the doors were opened for radicals to have their voices heard without the necessity to present another side of the issue as well.

With the end of the Fairness Doctrine came a decrease in the amount of traditional airtime dedicated to public affairs and news programming. But, the amount of substantive discussions about public policy that occur on talk radio, political blogs, and cable television have increased because of the decreased barriers to access (Sobieraj, Berry, 9). Although there has been an increase in programs containing political substance, there has also been an increase in programs that are purely entertainment. With the increase in cable and radio channels and programs, the choice to watch something other than political news has been made much easier (Morrison).

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

From the individual user's perspective, the increase of Internet usage including personal computer ownership and access to technology has allowed more people to become a part of the media and have their voices heard through blogs, op-eds, and online forums. While this trend is at opposite ends of the spectrum of deregulating mass media, they both support outrage politics (Sobieraj, Berry 7). Eliminating and lowering barriers for easier access through blogs has been a huge part of the increase in political views that are voiced on the Internet. In July 2006, there were 50 million blogs and today there are over 184 million as tracked by Technorati (Sobieraj, Berry, 12). With such a large amount of postings, bloggers compete in an "attention economy" in order to attract the most readers. In the political world, outrage seems to be a very successful way to gain and keep an audience interested and is potentially what the GOP is aiming to do with their followers (Sobieraj, Berry, 13).

### **Political Incivility Research**

The overriding presumption in research in this area is that incivility decreases political participation and faith in the government (Sobieraj, Berry, p.4). Negative campaign ads have been thought to discourage political participation because they are believed to erode citizens' trust in the government. It is generally accepted that uncivil political discourse in the media causes the public to have negative emotions in relation to political institutions and actors and lessens the perceived legitimacy of political figures (Forgette and Morris 2006, Fridkin and Kenney 2008, Mutz 2007, Mutz and Reeves 2005).

Although the aforementioned standpoint is a very common belief, Northeastern professor William G. Mayer states that negative campaigning is actually beneficial as a way to increase honesty within the campaign, because it exposes the truth about candidates. Also, he argues that it levels the playing field to reduce advantage of the incumbent for congressional candidates



Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

(Mayer). Others, such as Geer and Lau (2006) who found negative campaign ads increased voter turnout in Britain between 1980 and 2000 and Brader (2005, 2006), found that the emotional appeals in campaign advertising engage audiences to seek more information rather than discouraging them (Sobieraj, Berry).

Similarly, some researchers found that the effects of uncivil discourse are too complex to be placed solely in either the category of positive or negative. Kahn and Kenney (1999, 2004) found that certain actions such as negative advertisements and news coverage increased political involvement whereas direct mudslinging reduced it. They found that in each case, the outcome varied because the candidate's status and message as well as the outside criticism, differ in each instance. Brooks and Geer (2007) found that although incivility decreases the value the public places on political discussion, people who are viewing uncivil messages and are exposed to politics are more likely to vote than those who are not seeing the uncivil messages because they are not involved in politics.

The reason for the vast differences between these findings can be attributed to the definition of negativity and incivility and the operationalization of these concepts in each study. The ways in which these outcomes were measured differ from laboratory studies to surveys. Also, it is nearly impossible to isolate the impact of a single speech or advertisement within our broad and complex political environment (Sobieraj, Berry, 4-5).

### **Political Incivility Over Time**

Based upon prior research, it cannot be established that there has been a definite decline into negativity. The research conducted on negative campaign advertisements (Buell and Sigelman 2009, Geer 2006, Krebs and Holian 2007, West 2005) has found that there may be some value to negative advertising (Geer 2006). Geer believes that although people look

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

unfavorably upon negative advertisements, there is actually only a weak correlation between negative campaigning and dissatisfaction with the government despite common misconceptions (Geer 2006). Some research on political media strategies have shown that instead of an increase in negativity, it may be an increase in the media covering negativity and people complaining about the negativism of campaigns (Lau and Pomper 2004).

### **Spanish- and English-Language Media Coverage**

Regina Branton and Johanna Dunaway conducted research on the English- and Spanish-language media coverage of immigration by looking at newspapers in California between March 1, 2004 and March 1, 2005. They hypothesized that Spanish-language media would provide more frequent and less negative coverage of immigration issues than news offered by English-language media organizations. The underlying logic behind Branton and Dunaway's hypotheses was that based on economic theories of the news, there are economic incentives for different language news outlets to produce different types of news. This issue is politically important because it has the potential to influence public opinion on the issue of immigration.

Branton and Dunaway summarize the findings of several scholars who have focused on the demand-side explanation of news content in news media. Within these findings, it is strongly suggested that news content is market driven and the coverage of certain issues is influenced by consumer preference (Hamilton, 2004; Mullainthan and Shleifer, 2005; Baron, 2006; Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2006; Zaller, 1999; Arnold, 2004).

In conducting previous research, Branton and Dunaway found that the way issues are covered in the news can influence political opinions (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987; Kahn and Kenney, 2002; McCombs and Shaw, 1972). Also, how the media frames issues influences how

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

the public thinks about and evaluates issues (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987; Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley, 1997).

Branton and Dunaway make certain assumptions based upon existing research: first, “newspaper audiences prefer to read news that is consistent with their own views” and “because [newspapers] are economically motivated, news organizations are mindful of the preferences of their audiences and try to cater to those preferences whenever possible” (Branton and Dunaway). These assumptions are based upon research done by Severin and Tankard, 1992; Fiske, 1995; Graber, 2007; Mullainathan and Shleifer, 2005; Baron, 2006; Hamilton 2004; Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2006. Branton and Dunaway argue that the preferences of consumers, specifically toward immigration, determine the volume and nature of immigration news coverage. Because of these preferences, the economic motives of Spanish- and English-language news organizations differ significantly in how they cover immigration issues. They found that English-language news organizations generate a smaller volume of coverage and that it focuses on the negative aspects of immigration when compared with the Spanish-language counterparts.

Other findings discuss that the content put out by news organizations varies based upon group preferences (Hamilton, 2004), with increased competition in the media market, there is a general decrease in news content quality (Zaller, 1999; Arnold, 2004), and because media outlets are driven by efforts to maximize profit and influenced by audiences that prefer low-information news, the quality of content is decreasing (McManus, 1994). Also, seeking to maximize profit can lead to producing more biased news to appeal to a certain clientele (Baron, 2006), responding to consumer preferences frequently produces slanted news (Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2006), and news organizations cater to reader beliefs so homogeneous markets have more slanted news than heterogeneous markets (Mullainathan and Shleifer, 2005).

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

The Spanish-speaking audience is a fairly homogeneous market in terms of language, cultural ties, acculturation, and socioeconomic status (Rodriguez, 1999). Based on these findings, it would be expected for Spanish-speaking news sources to be slanted in favor of immigrant issues. This type of media focuses upon positive or neutral topics, whereas the English-language media is more likely to cover the negative aspects because of the broader audience they need to appeal to. When covering news for a heterogeneous audience, there is a frequent reliance upon the “crime news script” which focuses upon negative and sensational coverage (Gilliam and Iyengar, 2000; Gilliam, Valentino, Beckmann, 2000). When looking at immigration, this type of article would focus upon the illegalities such as border arrests, human smuggling, drug trafficking, and illegal border crossing. In fact, most English-language coverage of immigration focuses disproportionately upon these negativities of the issue and portrays Latinos, immigrants, and non-whites in general as outsiders prone to violence and crime (Larson, 2006; Iyengar, Peters, and Kinder, 1982; Gilliam and Iyengar, 2000; Gilliam, Valentino, and Beckmann, 2002; Subervi et al., 2005).

Because Spanish- and English-language media organizations cater to different audiences, it should be expected that they differ in their news coverage of immigration. Spanish-language media sources frequently put out a greater number of articles dealing with immigration issues.

Branton and Dunaway’s study controls for whether the newspapers are corporately owned versus publically traded. The reason they take this into account is because publicly owned companies are more concerned about profit margins whereas privately owned companies are concerned with maintaining a level of journalistic quality. Branton and Dunaway found that publicly owned companies are more beholden to their readership than are privately owned companies because they place more importance on profit margins and producing content that

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

attracts readers and media that the reader wants to consume than do privately owned companies that are more able to uphold journalistic quality than producing sensationalized content to attract readers and boost profits. Also, corporately owned newspapers cover immigration in a significantly more negative and frequent manner than privately owned media organizations.

Branton and Dunaway also look at the ethnic context at the county level. Up to a certain point, when there are more Latinos, there is more immigration coverage. Also, when the media organization is located in an area closer to the U.S.-Mexico border, there are more negatively slanted articles.

### **Policy Positions versus Racism**

Robert Short and Lisa Magana conducted a study of how people mask their underlying racism behind policy preferences. They conducted an experiment in which they measured the reaction to criminal behavior (getting parking tickets). In the two scenarios, the only thing they changed was the race of the person with or without parking tickets. The parking tickets were used as a “nonethnic rationale for discriminating against that ethnic group”.

Short and Magana discuss that immigrant populations are frequently constructed negatively (i.e. law breakers) and then used as scapegoats because they are not naturalized and therefore have little to no political power as they cannot vote. Because of this, they become the target of blame and the groups quickly become negatively construed in the public eye. Politicians are a large factor in this process, as they can blame these groups without any electoral repercussions or accountability. Also, politicians can further their own agendas by giving resources to specific groups and withholding them from others through “logical connections”, linking together positive and negative imagery with certain ethnic groups. In such situations,

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

racial categories get tied up with political initiatives thereby making the action of favoring or opposing these initiatives an opportunity to discriminate in a socially acceptable way.

### **Additional Research Areas**

Additional research must be done in several areas on this topic. While there is significant research on negative campaigning and the general voting trends of Hispanics, there could definitely be more research done on how the outrage industry discusses Hispanic subgroups in the United States. Because this issue deals with opinions and the media, a content analysis could be very telling. Measuring the reactions of Spanish-speaking writers and comparing it to English-language media would be interesting.

### **Content Analyses of Incivility in Political Speech**

Although data is not conclusive about a definitive decline in political civility, public opinion is concerned about the level of incivility in our society. Because of this fact, the topic has been studied by many academics in the recent past. While research has been done, there has not been a significant amount of broad content analysis conducted on political discourse in the media. Rather than producing a single overarching piece of research, many different researchers have looked at various aspects of the issue. Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Joseph N. Capella (2008) focus exclusively on outrageous personalities within the conservative opinion media. Because I am looking at these same personalities and their views on Hispanics, as well as how the English- and Spanish-language media cover these individuals, Jamieson and Capella's research was interesting to me.

The most comprehensive content analysis of uncivil rhetoric was conducted by Moy and Pfau (2000). They look at a wide range of media sources' depiction of political institutions in 1995 and 1996. They found that, "talk radio is most negative on the Presidency, while

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

entertainment talk shows depicted Congress in the least favorable manner,” (Sobieraj, Berry, 5).

A challenge in using the data found by Moy and Pfau in the mid-90’s is that the technology for media has changed so drastically since the time period they studied that there are large gaps in their research when compared with today’s political media.

The existing research provides an adequate answer to several important questions dealing with aspects of my overall topic, but it does not adequately address the issue as a whole. By looking at the different parts of my question in isolation, the overall picture is not clear. In my research, I will be looking at how outrage language is discussed in Spanish- and English-language media and answering questions about how that influences the political climate.

### **Conclusion**

By looking at both Spanish and English language media, we will be able to see if this type of rhetoric is crossing the language barrier. It is a very important issue to be discussing because a great deal of violence could eventually come from such visceral language. While the consequences may currently be seen only in public opinion polls, it has the potential to be seen in a much more serious and drastic scale in the future, especially concerning voting trends and public policy changes.

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

### **Chapter 3: Methodology and Content Analysis**

#### **Methodology**

I conducted my content analysis by looking at Spanish-language and English-language daily newspapers published in the same metropolitan area. I chose to look at *La Opinion* and *The Los Angeles Times* from Los Angeles, CA; *El Diario La Prensa NY* and *The New York Times* from New York City, NY; and *El Nuevo Herald* and *The Miami Herald* from Miami, FL. I chose these newspapers because they are all print newspapers that have archives available online. They are amongst the largest English-language and Spanish-language newspapers on the market and all the English-Language newspapers and *La Opinion* are part of the Burrelles Luce Top 100 US Daily Newspapers list (“Burrelles Luce”). By choosing newspapers that are published in the same geographic area, I am able to account for certain differences in topic coverage that may be a result of geography alone.

For the Los Angeles Area, I am looking at *La Opinion* and *The Los Angeles Times*. *La Opinion* is published daily in Los Angeles, CA with a distribution area spanning across Southern California. It is the largest Spanish-language newspaper in the United States. *The Los Angeles Times* has the most readers in Los Angeles and *La Opinion* has the second most. *The Los Angeles Times* is the second-largest metropolitan newspaper in circulation and the fourth most widely distributed newspaper in the United States (“About The...”).

*La Opinion* is privately owned and published in Spanish by ImpreMedia LLC, an equity company of the Lozano family. *La Opinion* began covering only the Mexican community, but has expanded to now include the Central American, South American, Cuban, and Puerto Rican populations. It also reports on a variety of issues that are relevant to Hispanics. *The Los Angeles Times* is owned by the Tribune Company and Eddy Hartenstein is the Publisher and Russ



Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

Stanton is the editor. It is published in English with 600,449 copies in circulation daily and 901,119 on Sundays (“History of..”).

From New York City I looked at *El Diario La Prensa* and *The New York Times*. *El Diario la Prensa* is the oldest and largest daily Spanish-language newspaper in New York City, as well as the oldest Spanish-language newspaper in the country. It was created in 1963 through the merging of *El Diaro de Nueva York* and *La Prensa* originally established in 1913. It is now published by Rossana Rosado and edited by Erica Gonzalez. It is owned by impreMedia LLC, which also owns *La Opinion*, and is moderate politically (“About Us”). *The New York Times* is the largest local metropolitan newspaper in the United States. It is owned by The New York Times Company and published by Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, Jr. and edited by Jill Abramson. It is published in English and has 1,150,589 copies in circulation daily and 1,645,152 on Sundays (“The New York Times Company”).

From Miami, FL, I looked at *El Nuevo Herald* and *The Miami Herald*. Both *El Nuevo Herald* and *The Miami Herald* are published daily and owned by The McClatchy Company, a publicly traded American publishing company. They are sister newspapers. *El Nuevo Herald* is published by David Landsberg and is the nation’s third-largest Hispanic market. *The Miami Herald* is the largest newspaper in South Florida. It is published by David Landsberg and edited by Aminda Marques Gonzalez. There are 240,223 copies in circulation daily and 311,245 on Sundays (“The Miami Herald Media Company”).

I planned to look at newspapers from the Washington, DC metro area as well, but the archives were unavailable online. I attempted to look at *El Tiempo Latino* and *The Washington Post*. Both *El Tiempo Latino* and *The Washington Post* are owned by The Washington Post Company, but only *The Washington Post*’s articles were available online to search. I then

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

attempted to use the archives from another DC area paper *Los Tiempos USA*, but the newspaper is only published weekly and does not have a website. The only website that exists is for the Bolivian branch of the company. Because of these difficulties, I decided to only use the three regions mentioned above and to omit Washington, DC.

It is important to take into account the bias of the newspapers used in this content analysis. Tim Groseclose and Jeffrey Milyo conducted a study to measure media bias. They found that *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The New York Times* are all left of the American voter (Groseclose, Milyo). Of the three, *The Washington Post* was ranked the closest to moderate and *The New York Times* had the largest liberal slant. *The Miami Herald* was not ranked and neither were any of the Spanish-language newspapers. Although the Spanish-language newspapers were not ranked by Groseclose and Milyo, it is important to note that Hispanic media generally has a liberal bias (Branton and Dunaway).

In my content analysis, I looked at three types of articles: articles dealing with Herman Cain's suggestion for a lethal electric fence on the U.S.-Mexico border, articles covering The Dream Act, and articles about S.B.1070. I had planned to look at articles covering the 2012 Presidential Election and immigration legislation, but I found that a great deal of the articles I pulled in the other topic areas overlapped with this topic sufficiently. It may have been because of the timeframe of the articles I coded, but a large percentage focused upon election and campaign issues and personalities. I chose these topics because they deal with immigration and are relevant to the current political climate. With the growing Hispanic population in the United States, and therefore a growing proportion of the electorate, these issues are of utmost importance looking toward the future. Immigration issues have been highly controversial as of late, so these topics include the same sentiments of high emotional tension.

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

I used Sobieraj and Berry's coding scale for outrage language. The different types of outrage language as described by Sobieraj and Berry are: insulting language, name calling, emotional displays, emotional language, verbal fighting or sparring, character assassination, misrepresentative exaggeration, mockery or sarcasm, conflagration, ideological extremizing language, slippery slope, belittling, and obscene language. I did not code for emotional displays or verbal fighting or sparring because those types of language only take place in live media casts such as newscasts or cable talk shows.

Insulting language is when, "the author or speaker uses insulting language in reference to a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party, or other organization or their behaviors, planned behaviors, policies, or views," (Sobieraj, Berry). It is important to note that if the language is used to explicitly name call to make the subject look "foolish/inept, hypocritical, deceitful, or dangerous", then it falls under name calling rather than insulting language. Emotional language is written expression of anger, fear, and sadness. Character assassination is when the author, "attempts to damage the reputation" of the subject and is more extreme than simply questioning the veracity of a statement. For example, saying someone was dishonest is different than calling someone a liar who cannot be trusted (Sobieraj, Berry).

Misrepresentative Exaggeration is when the author uses dramatically negative exaggeration such as saying "Obama is Left of Lenin," (Sobieraj, Berry). Mockery or sarcasm is more serious than "affectionate, light-hearted teasing," but instead is, "humor that is used to make the subject look foolish/inept, hypocritical, deceitful, or dangerous," (Sobieraj, Berry). Conflagration is the attempt to make a non-scandal into a scandal. Ideologically extremizing language is used categorizing something ideologically as a slur rather than a simple description. Slippery slope is when something small is turned into a step that will "inevitably pave the way

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

for much more extreme behaviors, policies, or decisions,” (Sobieraj, Berry). Belittling is demeaning a person and may be done in the context of mockery or exaggeration, and obscene language is any use of obscenities, not just simply insulting words.

I coded for political stance on a five-point scale including left, center-left, center, center-right, and right. This was important to see whether the media was slanted a specific direction or had a significant bias. When the article had strongly pro-immigration or anti-Republican sentiments, it was coded as left. When the article included language that was slightly pro-immigrant but not outwardly ideological, it was slanted as center-left. When the article was neutral and written in a more unbiased journalistic tone, it was coded as center. When the article was not anti-left but did include the anti-immigration sentiments that are a part of the current Republican Party stance, it was coded as center-right. When the article included those same sentiments but also included anti-Democratic Party rhetoric, it was coded as right.

I also coded for the amount of importance placed upon the issue in the article and called it a “significance test”. The three categories in this section were focus articles, not primary focus articles, and side-note articles. I thought it was important to note whether the story is about the topic or if the topic was merely mentioned or referred to. If the story was about the topic in majority or in entirety, it was coded as “focus”. If the topic was not mentioned until the end of the article or was only mentioned in a quote with a brief supporting explanation, then it is coded as “not primary focus”. If the topic was only mentioned once and the main point of the article does not rely at all on that reference, the article is a “side-note”.

I also coded the stories in different story categories. These categories were crime stories, local color stories, political personality and candidate stories, legislation stories, op-eds, and other which included entertainment and sports stories. Crime stories focused upon arrests,

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

criminal behavior, and instances of deportation. Local color stories were human-interest pieces focusing on a specific “character”. Political personality and candidate stories focused on the views of elected officials and campaign events. Legislative stories explained a piece of legislation in detail. These categories were significant because I thought it was important to see the angles the reporters were reporting the topics from. It tells more of a story about how the issues are being portrayed and discussed.

### **Content Analysis**

In order to answer the question of how English-language and Spanish-language media typically cover the issue of immigrants and immigration, specifically dealing with Hispanics, I conducted my content analysis by looking at Spanish-language and English-language daily newspapers published in the same metropolitan area. I chose to look at *La Opinion* and *The Los Angeles Times* from Los Angeles, CA; *El Diario La Prensa* and *The New York Times* from New York City, NY; and *El Nuevo Herald* and *The Miami Herald* from Miami, FL. I had planned to use content from *El Tiempo Latino* or *Los Tiempos USA* and *The Washington Post* from Washington, DC, but the archives of the Spanish-language newspapers from that region were not available online. *Los Tiempos USA* was only available in the Bolivian version, *Los Tiempos*, and therefore was not a viable option for my content analysis.

I coded for date, topic, slant, length, substantiality, the eleven types of outrage language in written media (insulting language, name calling, emotional language, character assassination, misrepresentative exaggeration, mockery or sarcasm, conflagration, ideological extremizing language, slippery slope, belittling, and obscene language), the total outrage rating, and the story category. I coded for slant on a five-point scale including left, center-left, center, center-right,

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

and right. Substantiality was measured as focus, not primary focus, and side-note. The total outrage rating is the number of chunks (paragraphs) that include outrage language. The story categories I used were candidate/campaign stories, local color stories, crime stories, op-eds, legislative stories, and other. The definitions of my coding scale are included in the appendix.

### **The Dream Act Background**

The first articles I looked at were about The Dream Act. The Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act's purpose is to give illegal immigrants an opportunity to gain citizenship if they meet certain qualifications that evolved and changed throughout the various drafts of the bill. In its earliest stages, the Dream Act was meant to provide conditional permanent residency to certain illegal and deportable alien students who graduate from U.S. high schools or earn a GED. The breakdown of the different aspects of the bill is as follows: beneficiaries must have arrived in the US before a certain age (either 15 or 16), have lived in the US for a period of 5 consecutive years, be within an age range specified in the statute at the time it is enacted (various ranges between 12 and 35), have either graduated from an American high school or obtained a GED or have been admitted to an institution of higher education, and be of "good moral character", which typically means that the student is law abiding ("FAQ"). If a student completes two years in the military, a community college, or a four-year higher learning institution, they would then be eligible to obtain the status of temporary resident under some drafts and "conditional" status under others for a length of six years. After the six-year period, if the illegal immigrant minor meets least one of those three conditions, he or she would be eligible to apply for legal permanent resident status (Jordan). While it seems like the Dream Act is applicable to a large population, it is estimated that only 7,000 to 13,000 college students nationally can fulfill the obligations the act prescribes (Robb).

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

Being a “melting pot” is one of America’s claims to fame. People from all over the world move to the United States hoping to better their lives and gain freedoms unique to the U.S. Because of this, the broad issue of immigration has become a hotly debated topic that not only consists of the ways through which to keep track of people moving in and out of America, but also deciding who is legally allowed to be in this country and for what duration of time. The Dream Act is a national piece of legislation that epitomizes this issue. It encompasses the idea of the American Dream and is at the core of the immigration discussion in current political debate. Because of its prominence in political discourse and importance to Hispanics, I found it paramount to discuss in my thesis.

The context of immigration has greatly varied throughout history. Currently, the main immigrant demographic is Hispanics, but the history of immigration is important to understanding the current atmosphere surrounding the issue. Although the founding fathers of our country were technically immigrants, immigration to the United States was greatly restricted by Congress in 1924 due to concerns over national security in the wake of World War I, and in an effort to “preserve the ideal of American homogeneity,” (“Milestones”). In 1943, naturalization was liberalized again and in 1965, the national origin restrictions were taken away (“Immigration and...”).

Now, much of the legal immigration into the United States is based upon reuniting families or is skill based (Fitz). Currently, it is estimated that there are about eleven million illegal immigrants in the United States (Miranda). This number leveled off last year following a two-year decline from the peak of twelve million undocumented aliens in 2007 (Gaynor). Because of this large population, the current immigration issue mainly consists of what to do

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

with illegal immigrants who are already in this country (“Immigration Law”). One proposed solution is the Dream Act.

Although the Dream Act has been rewritten numerous times (as the DREAM Act and the American Dream Act, which are both referred to as the Dream Act), it has never successfully passed through both houses of the United States Congress in order to become law. The basic purpose of the Act across all drafts is a piece of legislation meant to establish a path through which citizenship is granted to the children of illegal immigrants who entered the United States illegally, but were raised in this country and are now upstanding citizens contributing to society (Dias). This issue matters to Hispanics because it is central to their identity in this country and how society views them as a community. These are the sentiments that I discuss through my analysis of Spanish-language and English-language newspapers, representing the different cultures and their beliefs about the Hispanic community.

The Dream Act solely benefits minors who are illegal immigrants whose parents are also illegal immigrants. The minors came into the United States illegally by no choice of their own. The bill was first proposed to Senate on August 1, 2001, but under a different name. It was introduced to both the House and Senate in the 108<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> congresses with slightly different qualifications and clauses. The text of the bill has also been placed in various other failed immigration-related bills such as the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006 and the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007 (“FAQ”).

The Dream Act was most recently incorporated into the National Defense Authorization Act for the 2011 fiscal year, including a repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”. On September 21, 2010, the Senate’s filibuster was maintained in a 56-43 vote, just four votes short of passing. The next day, Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) introduced the bill again along with Richard Lugar (R-



Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

IN). This time, only two senators cosponsored the bill and it was defeated again. On November 16, 2010, President Barack Obama and Democrats in top leadership positions pledged to re-introduce the Dream Act into the House by November 20, 2010 (Dias). The House of Representatives passed the Dream Act on December 8, 2010, but it only received 55 votes on the Senate floor, failing to pass yet again (Dann).

This issue is on the national political agenda because Americans feel this is a pressing issue of national security and the economy. In a poll conducted by the Economist in June 2010, 83% of respondents said that the issue of immigration was either very important or somewhat important to them (Question 4). Currently, the bill is stalled at the national level. President Obama stated in his State of the Union address for 2012 that he wanted to try again with the bill this year, but with the Republicans holding a majority in the House, the chances of success are poor. Many Republicans vehemently oppose the legislation and hold crucial committee positions critical to passing the bill (Preston). Some states have realized the improbability of passing the Dream Act at a national level so they have implemented, or are attempting to implement, similar watered-down laws on a state level. While the laws do not offer formal paths to citizenship, they do allow access to higher education benefits. Economically, the Center for American Progress produced a report saying that over the next ten years, the Dream Act would reduce the deficit by \$2.2 billion and America cannot afford not to pass the act (Fitz).

The main issues stemming from immigration that people dislike deal with breaking laws and not being punished, draining resources that are paid for by American tax dollars, and issues of national security and the military. Specifically in the Dream Act, people are concerned about granting amnesty and rewarding people for breaking the law. Also, there was a section of the Act

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

that allowed illegal immigrant students to receive higher-education benefits, which adversaries believed was unfair and a misuse of tax money.

One of the main arguments against the Dream Act was saying that it was an attempted form of amnesty. People on this side of the argument believed that it would encourage chain migration and further illegal immigration in anticipation of new versions of the act (Hudson). Others believe that the Dream Act should only be enacted as part of a comprehensive immigration reform otherwise they believe it is simply a form of forgiveness without punishment.

People believe that allowing this group of illegal immigrants a path to citizenship without punishment will lead to a slippery slope of amnesty. “The alien can then use his newly acquired status to seek green cards for the parents who brought him in illegally in the first place. In this way, it is also a backdoor amnesty for the millions of illegal aliens who brought their children with them to the United States” (Kobach). People arguing against this say that as children, they had no control over being brought to the United States in the first place.

Also, opponents of the act think that it will lead to chain migration. “It would also result in a de facto amnesty for many parents, and entitle these kids to sponsor other relatives in the future,” (Mehlman). The argument against this is that people receiving Dream Act benefits are not given a free ride without significant effort on their part. They must pay back taxes and demonstrate their English abilities and knowledge of all aspects of the U.S. (“Dreaming of...”). It also does not allow beneficiaries of the Dream Act to sponsor family members for US Citizenship. They could not begin sponsoring parents or siblings for at least twelve years and could never sponsor extended family members. Finally, anyone not covered under the act would have to leave the country for ten years before they could gain legal status (Dias).

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

If the Dream Act were enacted, it would have repealed Section 505 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996. This would restore the option for states to determine residency status solely for the purpose of higher education benefits. In order to bypass this provision, specific states, most notably Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico, have passed legislation to legally avoid violating IIRIRA. Some students paying out-of-state tuition filed lawsuits in these states claiming that state education officials violated federal law (Drachman, Langran, p. 24). The most common argument against this is that it is a misuse of American tax dollars. “The American people realize the injustice of giving illegal aliens a taxpayer-subsidized education when out-of-state U.S. citizens and law-abiding foreign students have to pay the full cost of their education,” (Kobach).

Some concerns about the Dream Act in this vein were about whether or not participants would be taking away resources from legal citizens such as being able to obtain federal higher education grants such as Pell grants during the six-year period. They are in fact not eligible for such grants, but they can apply for student loans and work-study. Also, it is a misconception that the bill required states to give instate tuition to beneficiaries of the act when it only removed the ambiguity in a state’s right to offer these benefits to illegal immigration students, but states would not be forced to offer instate tuition. Ultimately, the language regarding instate tuition was removed because it was confusing language (Fitz).

Prior to September 11, 2001, immigration was seen as a primarily economic and labor issue. In reaction to the terrorist attacks, the Department of Homeland Security was created and is now in charge of immigration issues on the basis of law enforcement. By allowing a path to citizenship for these illegal immigrant minors combined with strengthening border security, the fear of experiencing another terrorist attack has declined. Also, illegal immigrants who are in the

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

country may fail to report crimes they have witnessed simply because they are afraid of the consequences they will face due to being illegal so giving them a path to citizenship alleviates this problem (Hudson). This is why many people believe the Dream Act must be part of an overall immigration reform.

Some would argue against this by saying, "The idea of training illegal aliens to use elite weaponry is not a good national security strategy because many illegal immigrants have separatist and racist political ideologies," referring to the act's path to citizenship through military services (Sifuentes). Others call it a draft for immigrants. "The Dream Act is supported by some in Congress, the military and in some immigrant rights groups who say it would benefit immigrant children while bolstering the military ranks," (Sifuentes). But, it is obvious why the military is interested in the Dream Act, "Because the provision would apply only to high school graduates who have stayed out of trouble, it would be "very appealing" to the military," (Sifuentes).

The main proponents of for the Dream Act are Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL), Richard Lugar (R-IN), and Charles "Chuck" Hagel (R-NE), and the military. Durbin was the chief proponent of the Dream Act in Senate. He is a high-powered Senator, currently serving as the Democratic Party Whip and was the first U.S. Senator to support Barack Obama's presidential candidacy and has a close relationship with the President (Dann). He has run fairly safe elections since 2002 and is able to take a somewhat controversial position heading this act because of his political safety (Jordan). Lugar and Hagel have similar backgrounds in military service and were both powerful members of Congress. Lugar has held the position as the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and is the third most senior senator, and Hagel served as the Deputy Administrator of Veteran Affairs under President Ronald Reagan. In general, Lugar has a

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

liberal stance on immigration and supported the McCain-Kennedy Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill that died in Congress (Toeplitz). While in office, Hagel generally supported a pathway to citizenship and a guest worker program for undocumented immigrants (Miranda)

The United State Military made arguments in favor of the Dream Act because they faced enlistment challenges in 2005. With the 2007-2010 economic downturn, many of these problems dissipated, but the majority of the military is still in support of the act because currently, immigrants without green cards are not allowed to enlist (Wilson). Also, several senior Department of Defense officials spoke in favor of promising legal status to members of the military as a means of boosting recruitment in 2007. The current and former Secretaries of Defense from both parties support the Dream Bill because it strengthens the armed forces and benefits their agendas (Herszenhorn).

One of the main actors in opposition is Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson (R-TX) along with the majority of the GOP. One of the largest victories in gaining bipartisan support was when Hutchinson (R-TX) announced on the Senate floor that Durbin made a verbal commitment to work with her to make changes she saw necessary to garner greater Republican support (Warne). This statement was important because she had previously opposed the act publicly. She wanted illegal immigrant students to hold a temporary student visa with a renewable work permit instead of conditional permanent residency. Despite her support, the filibuster was not defeated in 2007 because it fell short by 8 votes, not allowing the legislation to even be considered (Davis).

### **Dream Act Content Analysis Results**

When I pulled articles from the six newspapers, my search phrase was 'Dream Act' within a 15-month period from the beginning of January 2011 until the time of my coding which was March 2012. I chose this timeframe because not all of the newspaper search engines were

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

sophisticated enough to refine the search by exact days, but all allowed for a search within 2011 and 2012. It was a long enough timeframe that accounted for potential changes in opinion surrounding certain specific issues within the broader topic of the Dream Act, such as a local legislature passing or not passing a form of the Dream Act or political campaigns and candidate posturing about their position on an issue. This specific timeframe encompasses the lead-up to the 2012 Presidential campaign, including the primaries and caucuses to select the Republican nominee. Because of these situational factors, the Dream Act was in the news extremely frequently because it is a piece of national legislation that directly represents the national immigration issue. It came up frequently in debates and was covered in-depth by the media, and therefore was central to discussing the topic of my thesis.

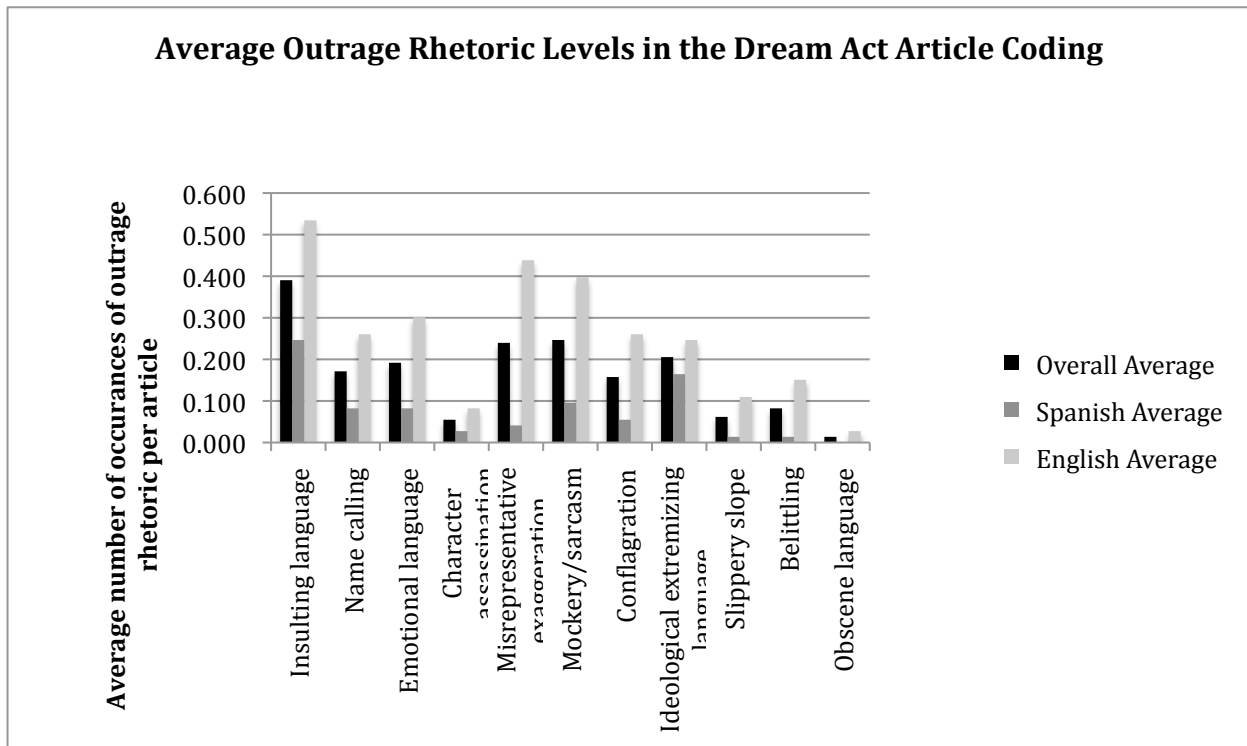
The timeframe was short enough so there were not thousands of articles in each newspaper, but long enough to get a broad overview of the political discourse concerning the Dream Act and immigration. In fact, the searches within each newspaper's archives came up with a different number of overall results, but I chose samplings of about 20-30 articles from each paper. The Spanish-language papers, with the exception of *The New York Times*, came up with more articles covering the Dream Act than the English-language papers. This could be indicative of the interests of the audiences reading the newspapers. Once I took a sampling of the articles, I ended up with a total of 146 articles; 73 articles from English-language newspapers and 73 articles from Spanish-language newspapers. One takeaway from this initial observation is that Spanish-language readers potentially care more about the issue of the Dream Act than English-language readers because they are personally involved and invested in the issue. The greater number of Dream Act articles in the Spanish-language newspapers is likely a product of newspapers being beholden to the interests of their readerships. The greater number of Spanish-

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

language articles than English-language articles is a reflection of the different balance of interests between the two readerships.

I found that the English-language articles included over three times as much outrage rhetoric as did the Spanish-language articles. The average for instances of outrage rhetoric used in a Spanish-language article was .8 instances whereas it was 2.7 instances in an English-language article. The average usage within my entire Dream Act content analysis was 1.8 instances. The high levels of outrage in the English-language newspapers could be a reflection of national sentiments of the English-language reading community regarding the Dream Act. The particularly low level of outrage rhetoric in the Spanish-language newspapers by comparison is indicative of the vast difference in opinion of the Dream Act between the English-language readers and Spanish-language readers. It may be true that there is a lower incidence of outrage language in Spanish-language newspapers because the readership expects the topic to be covered more objectively, seriously, and without distorting sensationalism. This imbalance in rhetorical usage between Spanish- and English-language newspapers is an indicator that the underlying sentiments of the communities towards immigration differ as well because the newspapers are beholden to profits and thus beholden to the preferences, attitudes, and expectations of their readership.

*Table 1: Average Outrage Rhetoric Levels in the Dream Act Article Coding*



As shown in *Table 1*, the highest type of outrage language used in both the Anglo and Hispanic newspapers was insulting language followed by misrepresentative exaggeration and mockery or sarcasm. This reflects the divisive character of the discourse when discussing the Dream Act. The fact that insulting language was one of the highest types of outrage language for this topic indicates the degree to which this issue is polarized between the two communities and the level of animosity over the issue. For instance, an article in *The Miami Herald* discusses the primary race in Florida and the positions on immigration of the candidates and demonstrates how the act and the issue of immigration is used as leverage for personal attacks on candidates. It notes Newt Gingrich as being a “Freddie Mac insider” and inserts a quote by Brad Coker, a Mason Dixon Research & Associates pollster, saying, “Newt’s problem is consistency. He zigs and zags... One minute he’s upbeat and positive. The next he’s the attack dog. It’s almost bipolar. He obviously scares the Republican establishment,” (Caputo). It is noteworthy that the



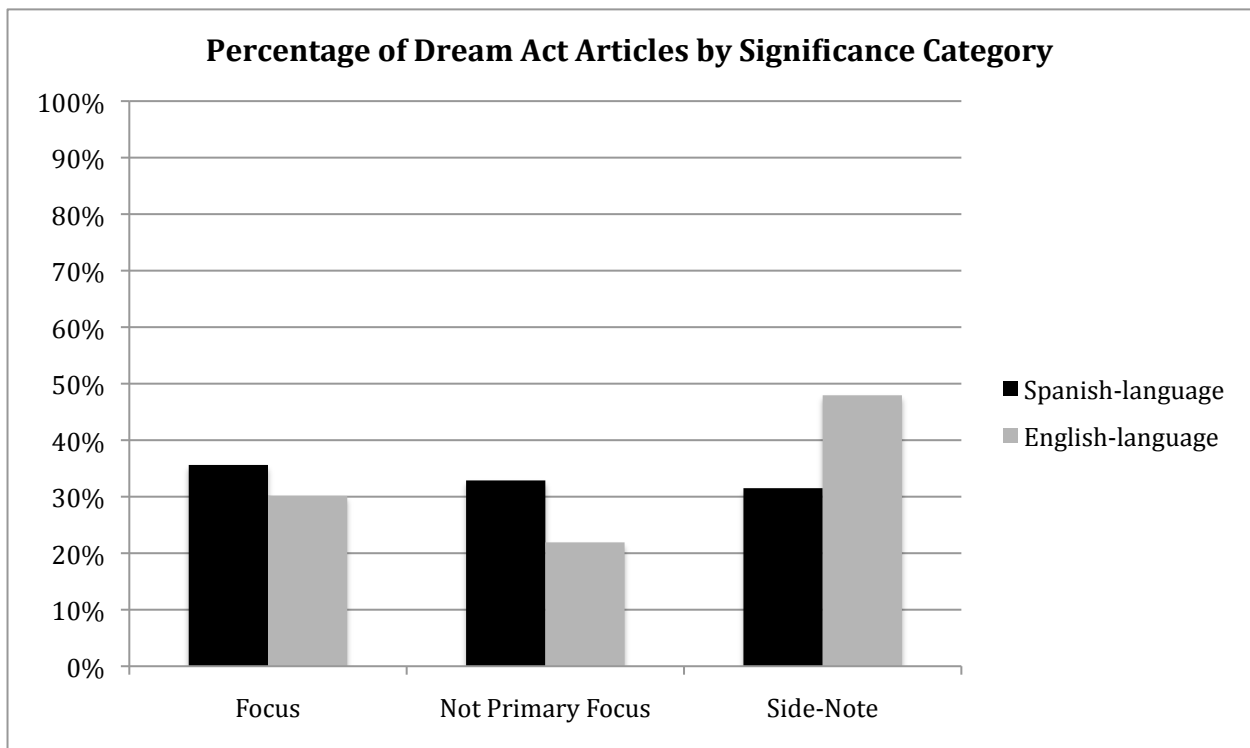
Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

outrage language does not focus directly on the issue itself, but is instead a personal attack on a candidate. This is perhaps reflective of a broader trend where the substance of an issue is ignored in favor of being used as a platform for personal attacks, diminishing the importance of the issue and instead calling into question an individual's character.

Another example of such language is from an article written by Patt Morrison published in the *Los Angeles Times* on February 4, 2012. The article entitled "Pocho pundit Lalo Alcaraz" is an op-ed that discusses various aspects of Alcaraz's Hispanic-based humor including the Twitter @MexicanMitt, "The Juan percent" and painting the White House brown with Lalo Alcaraz, the cartoonist behind "La Cucaracha". Alcaraz created a faux-Mitt Romney Twitter account @MexicanMitt to mock Romney's positions on immigration. To describe Mexican Mitt, Alcaraz said, "He's against the Dream Act; he thinks undocumented students should only dream of him. He loves firing people; he goes to Home Depot and hires undocumented workers just to fire them," (Morrison). His tagline on twitter is, "I am the most Mexican man in the world! Follow me as I run for president of the United Estates," and has noteworthy tweets that include: "I am the Juan percent,"; "I am a job creator,"; and "his tax plan is the Juan Juan Juan Plan: 1% tax on the 1% rich 1 time only," (Morrison). Romney is the target of all these jokes, but the purpose of the jokes is to highlight the hypocrisy of Romney's platform, political identity, and statements. Romney has claimed to have Hispanic roots simply because his father was born in Mexico as a Mormon missionary, and Mexican Mitt is a tribute to that character (Morrison). Again, this rhetoric focuses upon a specific person rather than the issue of the Dream Act itself. It calls into question Romney's character by using personal attacks in place of attacking the issue.

Through language similar in sentiment to the aforementioned, it is apparent that emotions are running extremely high when such comments are made. People are passionate about the issue and therefore use a great deal of insulting language, but it is intriguing that the language is directed at a candidate rather than the issue itself. These issues are paramount to peoples' futures and candidates are the vessels that determine the outcome, and therefore people are invested in the individual personalities that alter the outcome. By sensationalizing the issue, the substance of the issue itself is ignored and the focus of the audience is instead drawn toward individuals and personalities. This indicates a relationship between the amount of outrage rhetoric and the degree to which a topic is covered explicitly, objectively, and substantively as opposed to leveraging the subject for personal attacks, sensationalism, and subjectivity.

*Table 2: Percentage of Dream Act Articles by Significance Category*



Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

In terms of the coverage of the topic itself, the Spanish-language newspapers covered the Dream Act in slightly more depth than did the English-language newspapers. The Spanish-language newspaper articles were coded as having a third of each of the categories in significance: 26 focus, 24 not primary focus, and 23 side-note articles. The English-language newspaper articles on the other hand were coded as 30% focus, 22% not primary focus and 48% side-note. The breakdown was 22 focus, 16 not primary focus, and 35 side-note. This breakdown, as shown in *Table 2*, is not drastically different between the number of focus articles, but it is interesting how many more side-note articles were included in the English-language newspapers than in the Spanish-language newspapers. Almost half of the English-language newspaper articles were side-notes, indicating that the Dream Act was thrown in as a talking point, but was not necessary to the central idea of the article and could be easily removed. In contrast, when the Dream Act was discussed in Spanish-language articles, it was not as easily dropped in, but was commented on in slightly more detail to be categorized as not primary focus instead of side-note. This may be because the authors and the audience alike of the Spanish-language articles are more personally invested in the issue and therefore allow for more in-depth discussion on the topic. This makes sense when considering that the papers are beholden to their audiences and the Spanish-language reading audience is more concerned with immigration issues as a whole.

The breakdown for the story category is fairly similar. Of the Spanish-language articles, there were 42 candidate, 11 local color, 3 crime, 6 op-eds, 10 legislative, and 1 other (entertainment). Of the English-language articles, there were 39 candidate, 10 local color, 4 crime, and 20 legislative. I found it interesting that the English-language sampling included twice as many legislative articles as did the Spanish-language sampling. The Spanish-language

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

newspapers tend to treat these issues in a more humane way compared with the English-language newspapers, which see them as colder, legal and political issues. The fact that the English-language newspapers have twice as many legislative articles as the Spanish-language newspapers could be an indication of this because the communities that read the English-language newspapers do not have as significant of a personal or emotional stake in these issues. The Spanish-speaking community reading these papers has a huge stake in these issues and therefore the tone is different.

It seems likely that there was such a high level of candidate stories because we are in the year leading up to a presidential campaign and media sources of all sorts are covering the candidates and their campaigns. This falls under the same logic that newspapers are beholden to what their audiences want to read about; the presidential election and the presidential candidates are newsworthy because audiences want to read about these topics. In the same vein, the Dream Act is a national piece of legislation and therefore is important to political figures running for national office. Because a large proportion of the electorate places importance on immigration issues such as the Dream Act, the audiences reading newspapers also place importance on the positions the candidates running for office take on these issues. If implemented, the Dream Act would affect a vast amount of the electorate and therefore is a very important issue to discuss on the campaign trail. It is politically beneficial for the candidates to discuss these issues just as it is economically beneficial for newspapers to cover these issues.

The breakdown of the articles that are not campaign stories or local color stories is interesting. While the numbers for campaign stories and local color stories are similar across languages, the fact that the majority of the remaining stories in the English-language newspapers were legislative stories whereas they were an array of different type of stories in the Spanish-

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

language newspapers is telling. This may be an indication that the English-language newspapers and audience view the Dream Act as strictly legislative whereas the Spanish-language newspapers portray it as something that would deeply and personally affect their audience and therefore cover the stories with a more human angle. Perhaps this is a reflection that the English-language newspapers are treating the Dream Act and the associated issue of immigration in a negative light whereas the op-eds from the Spanish language newspapers reflect the personal involvement and stake of the Spanish-language reading community.

The English-language articles were longer than the Spanish-language articles. The breakdown of Spanish-language articles were: 28 articles less than 500 words, 40 articles between 501 and 1000 words, and 5 articles longer than 1000 words. The breakdown of English-language articles were: 16 articles less than 500 words, 30 articles between 501 and 1000 words, and 27 articles longer than 1000 words. The length of the articles in and of itself does not give much insight, but combined with the fact that many of the English-language articles were coded as being side-notes and not the primary focus of the article makes sense that the English-language articles were in general longer than the Spanish-language articles.

### **SB 1070 Background**

The Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act (SB 1070) is an Arizona state immigration law that was a reaction to the federal inaction on the immigration issue. At the time it was passed, it was viewed as the strictest anti-illegal immigration law in the United States. Since then, several other states have followed suit and passed similar laws. It has become an extremely controversial issue locally and nationwide (Lacey). It is seen as anti-immigrant and issues of racial profiling have been brought up. The entire state of Arizona was boycotted on a significant level by sports franchises, musical acts, and conferences in response to

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

the law's passing. This was a huge hit to the economy, but the majority of the legislation is still in place despite significant parts of SB 1070 being ruled unconstitutional (Dever).

Through the case of *Arizona v. United States*, Federal District Judge of Arizona Susan R. Bolton ruled upon the constitutionality of Arizona immigration statute SB 1070, which would allow "officers to inquire about immigration status only of people they stop, detain or arrest in enforcing existing state law," (*Immigration and Emigration*). The controversial issue brought up in this case deals with racial profiling. Acting as a judicial activist protesting against SB 1070, Bolton ruled that provisions in SB 1070 were unconstitutional because they "interfere with federal law and policy" and preempt federal authority (Pickert).

SB 1070 also makes being in the state of Arizona as an illegal immigrant a state misdemeanor crime. The law requires individuals to carry the required documents and a police officer can ask for proof of an individual's immigration status as long as there is reasonable suspicion that the person is in the country illegally. 'Reasonable suspicion' is an ambiguous term that can lead to discrimination. It allows for individual interpretation and leaves room for systemic abuse. S.B. 1070 also cracks down on people who shelter, hire, or transport illegal immigrants (Dever). Such abuses including racial profiling and ignoring other serious crimes taking place in Arizona in favor of cutting down on illegal immigration took place in the state of Arizona with Sheriff Joe Arpaio in charge. Legal immigrants and Arizona citizens alike have protested Arpaio and he has been accused by the media of ignoring child pornography cases and other serious offenses in favor of carrying out his own personal vendettas to crack down on immigration. He takes strong stances on issues that are frequently extremely controversial and has made a name for himself as the toughest sheriff in the country (Ampuero).

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

In the case of S.B. 1070, actors in the state of Arizona felt it necessary to create legislation addressing the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently in the United States that Congress and the President had failed to confront (*Dreaming of Reform*). This is an example of when the Executive and Legislative branches failed to legislate concerning a controversial issue pertinent to the public, forcing others to take it upon themselves and act. Just as the United States Postal Service, a part of the bureaucracy, circumvented the inaction of Congress and the President by implementing their own gun control laws by making a rule that guns could not be sent through the mail, the state of Arizona, an actor outside of the main three federal branches of government, created S.B. 1070 (Greenhouse).

Arizona Governor Jan Brewer has come under heat for this piece of legislation. It was signed into law on April 23, 2010 and scheduled to go into effect on July 29, 2010, but before that date the most severe aspects of the legislation had already been ruled unconstitutional. The United State Department of Justice even filed civil rights complaints against the state of Arizona. In addition to these national displays of backlash to the legislation, the United States Justice Department stripped Sheriff Joe Arpaio of his ability to check the immigration status of those in his custody and the author of the bill lost his position as an Arizona state Senator through a recall election (Lacey).

Proponents of the law were worried about the high crime rates in Arizona and other issues dealing with illegal immigration. Having illegal immigrants in the state is seen as a drain on the economy when they use resources that they are not paying for with taxes. Some such resources include arriving in the emergency room where it is illegal to refuse care to someone with a life-threatening condition and children of illegal immigrants attending public school in the

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

states. Also, crimes go unreported or escalate because of fear of deportation. Those in favor of the law also argue that jobs are taken away from American workers (Ampuero).

SB 1070's opponents argue that the jobs that illegal immigrants take are jobs that no American would want to do for such low wages. They argue that large parts of economies in states such as Arizona and California rely upon the work of illegal immigrants and the low wages they are willing to accept. Their belief is that many parts of the agriculture industries in these states would collapse without illegal immigrants. SB 1070 opponents are also worried about the potential for racial profiling. Because the law is worded somewhat vaguely, it leaves an opening for abuse of the law and discrimination. While the law itself may not have had malicious intent, the opponents of SB 1070 are extremely afraid of the potential consequences if people in power take advantage of the loophole to further their personal biases (Dever).

The opponents are also afraid that this law targets not only illegal immigrants, but all people of Hispanic origin. Because the law allows for police officers to ask to see the papers of any individual who they believe may be in the United States illegally, this judgment is based upon physical appearance alone. This in and of itself promotes stereotyping and creates an inherent racial bias against Hispanics as a whole (Dever).

It is important to note that SB 1070 is a piece of state legislation as compared to the Dream Act, which is a national piece of legislation. Although SB 1070 was a local law and thus might be expected to be treated differently than a national law, it gained notoriety at the national level because it had the potential to affect Hispanics and immigrants across the country. As more states took on similar forms of the law, a broader audience became nervous that such laws would affect their livelihood. Because of this phenomenon, it became the center of the national spotlight and important to discuss in my thesis.



Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

SB 1070 is an extremely important piece of legislation to discuss because despite being a state act, it still represents a national level existential threat to the Hispanic community. As other states have already begun to pass similar legislation, SB 1070 may be surpassing the Dream Act as a nationally important issue.

### **SB 1070 Content Analysis Results**

In the coding of SB 1070 articles, I had similar findings as my coding of the Dream Act articles. My search terms were ‘SB 1070’ and ‘Arizona immigration law’ in English, and ‘la ley de inmigración’ and ‘Arizona’ in Spanish. I searched within the same 15-month period as in my Dream Act coding from the beginning of January 2011 until the time of my coding, which was March 2012. SB 1070 had been in effect for a few months at the start of this timeframe, and was at the center of several legal battles through this period of time. Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio lost his ability to check the immigration status of people in holding during this timeframe and the legislator state Senator Russell Pearce underwent a recall election and lost his position as state Senate President (Lacey). This timeframe was a very interesting period for SB 1070 because it was the center of multiple controversies as well as influencing laws in other states and is therefore important at the national level.

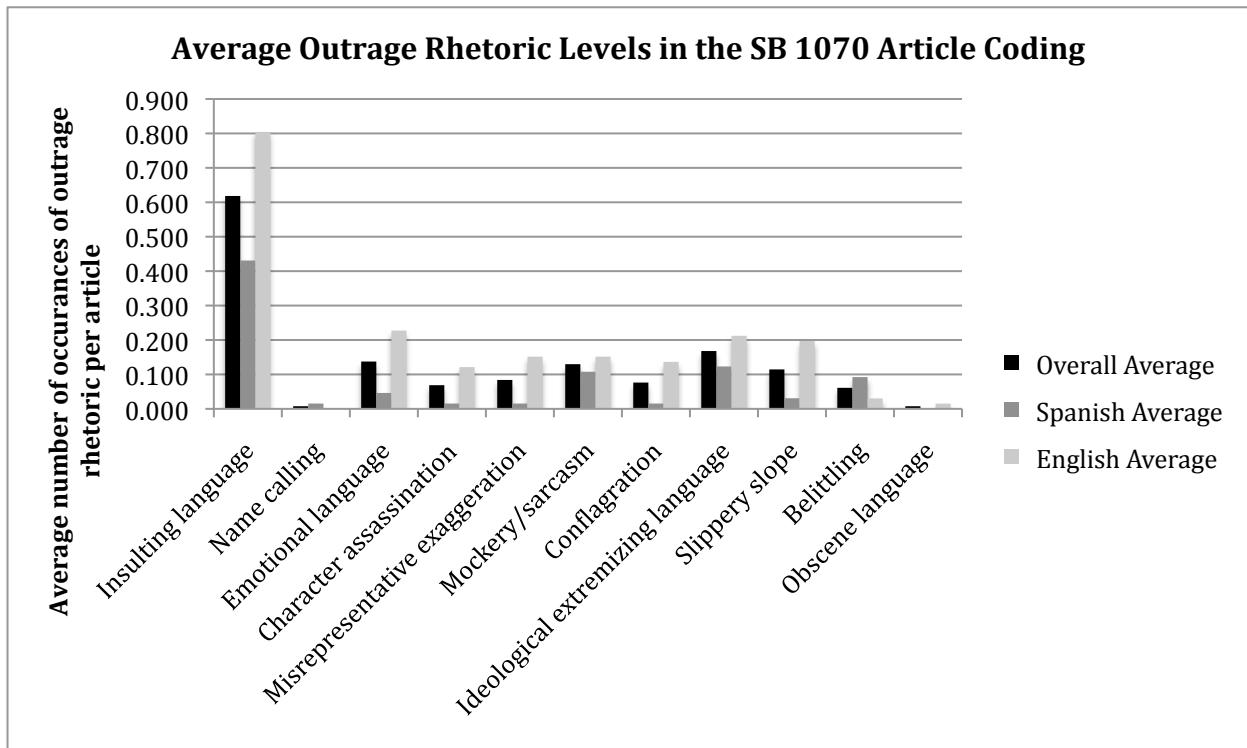
The law’s significance at the national level was apparent within my content analysis searches. The searches within each newspaper’s archives came up with a different number of overall results, but I chose samplings of about 20 articles from each paper. My SB 1070 search came up with fewer results than my search for Dream Act articles, but there were still too many articles to use every article for my content analysis. Once again, the Spanish-language papers, with the exception of *The New York Times*, came up with more articles covering SB 1070 than the English-language papers. Once again, this may be because newspapers, driven by profits, are

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

written for a specific audience and the Spanish-language reading audience is more personally invested and interested in immigration issues such as SB 1070. I ended up coding a total of 131 articles: 66 articles from English-language newspapers and 65 articles from Spanish-language newspapers.

The English-language articles included about twice as much outrage rhetoric as did the Spanish-language articles. The average for instances of outrage rhetoric used in a Spanish-language article was .9 instances whereas it was 2 instances in an English-language article. The average usage within my entire SB 1070 content analysis was 1.5 instances. This is a lower rate of outrage rhetoric in the English-language articles than in the Dream Act content analysis, but a slightly higher rate for the Spanish-language articles. This could be because the passing of SB 1070 is more threatening to the Spanish-speaking population than the Dream Act not being passed. Having such a drastic anti-illegal immigration law on the books is obviously a more threatening situation than the potential gain of having the Dream Act passed. It is the dynamic of having a threat implemented that makes life more difficult and threatens peoples' livelihood versus the potential of a beneficial law being passed that will make life easier. In addition, the circumstances of the Hispanic population being in opposition to the legislation as opposed to being in favor of it, as is the case with the Dream Act, results in greater use of outrage language.

*Table 3: Average Outrage Rhetoric Levels in the SB 1070 Article Coding*



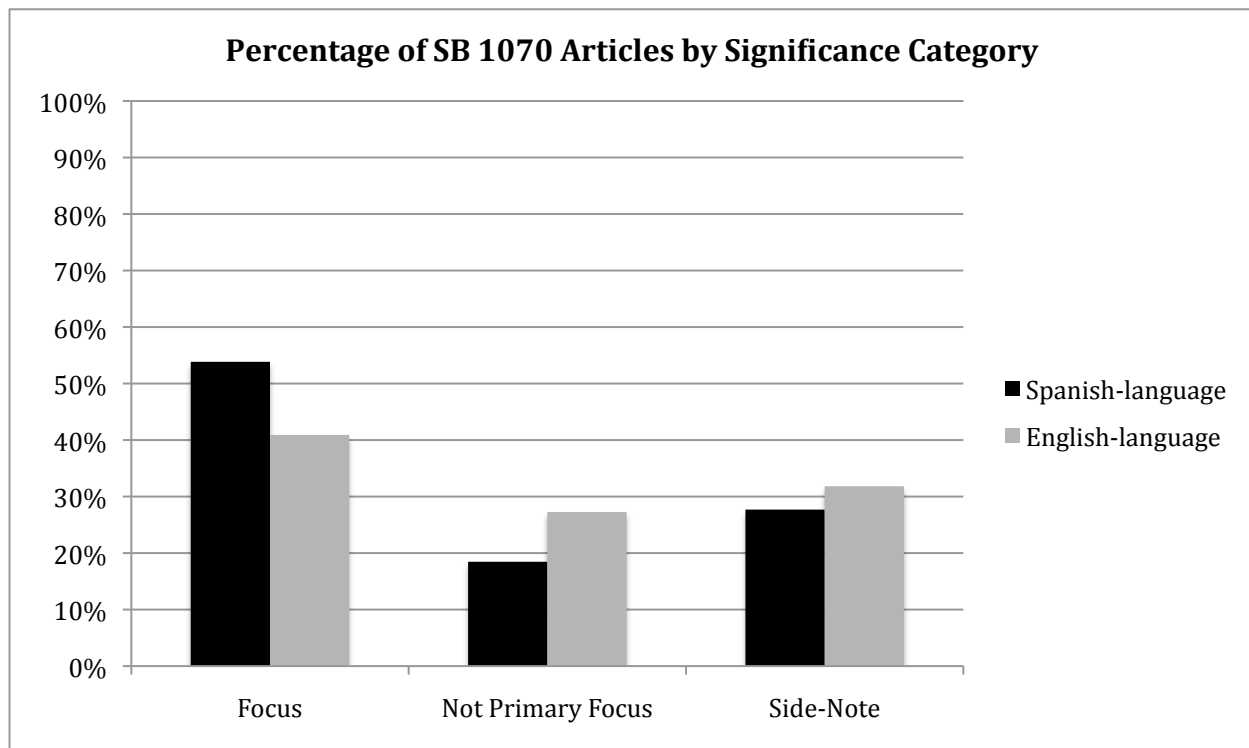
As seen in *Table 3* pictured above, the highest types of outrage language used in both the Anglo and Hispanic newspapers were insulting language, ideological extremizing language, mockery and sarcasm, and emotional language. One example of this language is from an article in the *New York Times* discussing the 2011 Major League All-Star Baseball game that took place in Phoenix on July 12, 2011. There was a great deal of controversy centered upon whether the game should in fact be held in Phoenix after SB 1070 was passed. Many groups protested and fans threatened to not attend. On the day of the event, the stands were crowded and there were no estimations of profit losses because of SB 1070. There was much controversy in the lead-up to the event that was featured in the news, especially surrounding Sheriff Joe Arpaio. The *New York Times* article “At All-Star Game, Politics and Passions Are Also in Play” written by George Vecsey stated, “Why should Sheriff Joe change now, just because fans all over the baseball diaspora will have their eyes on Phoenix for a couple of days?” (Vecsey). Such examples of

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

mockery and sarcasm were prevalent in my coding of this topic. The outrage rhetoric frequently was targeted at an individual and their views or actions concerning SB 1070. Some of the individuals that were highly discussed in this way were Sheriff Joe Arpaio, former state Senator Russell Pearce, Governor Jan Brewer, and various political candidates running for the Republican Presidential nomination.

It is intriguing that ideological extremizing language was not even in the top three highest uses of outrage language for the Dream Act, but is amongst the highest for SB 1070. The fact that this specific type of outrage language was one of the highest types of outrage rhetoric seen in the SB 1070 coding may be indicative of the stark ideological divide on the issue. The Dream Act has had more bipartisan support than has SB 1070 so this occurrence makes sense. Because people are so divided upon party lines on their opinions of SB 1070, the high levels of ideological extremizing language are to be expected. The presence of emotional language as a factor is also significant. The fear of having a piece of legislation negatively affect the lives of so many elicits a much more emotional response rather than a piece of legislation that could potentially positively affect the same population. The data changes when the Spanish-speaking group is in opposition to the legislation as opposed to being in favor of it by turning more emotional and including more outrage rhetoric in general.

*Table 4: Percentage of SB 1070 Articles by Significance Category*



In terms of the coverage of the topic itself, the Spanish-language newspapers discussed SB 1070 in a more humane manner than did the English-language newspapers. The Spanish-language newspaper articles focused upon the individuals affected by the legislation while the English-language newspaper articles discussed the positions of political figures on the issue. The Spanish-language articles were coded as: 35 focus, 12 not primary focus, and 18 side-note articles. The English-language newspaper articles on the other hand were coded as: 27 focus, 18 not primary focus, and 21 side-note. As shown in *Table 4*, both language newspapers had around half of the articles categorized as being focused mainly on the issue and the remainder split between not primary focus and side-note.

The breakdown for the story category is fairly similar across the language divide. Of the Spanish-language articles, there were 33 candidate, 4 local color, 1 crime, 1 op-ed, 24 legislative, and 1 other (entertainment). Of the English-language articles, there were 29 candidate, 5 local

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

color, 1 crime, 1 op-ed, 31 legislative, and 2 other. Although statistically the coverage seems similar, the differences came in the way in which the topic was covered. The angle in which the stories were covered were much more personal and sympathetic in the Spanish-language newspapers. The articles focused on individuals and their experiences with the law rather than simply the law itself. These such articles were not solely local color stories so they could not be coded in that way, but the tone of the legislative articles was much more personal in the Hispanic media. The Spanish-language newspapers also seemed to cover figures like Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Arizona much more frequently than the English-language newspapers. Arpaio is seen as a very anti-immigrant political figure and it therefore makes sense why the Hispanic media would cover him more closely than the Anglo media. Due to the fact that the Hispanic community has a vested interest in Arpaio's whereabouts because of the impact his actions has on their community, it is logical that their news source would keep more detailed accounts of the policies he is enforcing as well as the ways in which he enforces them. In summation, the personal nature of the threat of SB 1070 to the Hispanic community results in a more personal and emotional analysis of the issue in Spanish-language newspapers; there is significant focus on individuals, candidates, politicians, and other actors, and increased focus on individuals in the community that is affected.

The English-language articles were longer than the Spanish-language articles. The breakdown of English-language articles were: 27 articles less than 500 words, 25 articles between 501 and 1000 words, and 14 articles longer than 1000 words. The breakdown of Spanish-language articles were: 23 articles less than 500 words, 37 articles between 501 and 1000 words, and 5 articles longer than 1000 words.

### **Herman Cain Background**

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

Herman Cain, a candidate in the 2012 Republican Presidential race, made an anti-immigrant comment during his campaign that gained attention in the media for its racist sentiments. During his bus tour across Tennessee, Cain attended a campaign rally on Saturday October 15, 2011. At that rally while discussing his immigration policy, Cain stated that if elected he intended to build a lethal electrified fence on the United States-Mexico border to stop illegal immigrants from entering the country. "It's going to be twenty feet high. It's going to have barbed wire on the top. It's going to be electrified. And there's going to be a sign on the other side saying, 'It will kill you – Warning,'" (Wyatt). He also said that he would, "consider using military troops with real guns and real bullets on the border to stop illegal immigration," (Wyatt). The comment outraged the Hispanic community because of the overt threat of violence and racial underpinnings.

In order to understand the implications and context of this issue, it is important to understand Herman Cain as a candidate. Cain is a native of Georgia, but has succeeded in business in Philadelphia and Nebraska. Prior to his position at Godfather's Pizza, Cain worked at the corporate level for multiple companies in the food industry including the Coca-Cola Company and Burger King. After his management positions in the food industry, Cain began to explore politics and was appointed to the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City in 1992 and later became the head of the National Restaurant Association in 1994. He unsuccessfully ran in the 2000 presidential campaign as well as the 2004 Georgia Senate race. Despite his political failings, Cain remained a successful businessman, and shortly after the 2010 midterm elections, he decided to run in the 2012 Presidential election for the Republican ticket (Rutenberg and Shear).

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

Cain officially announced his candidacy to be the 2012 Republican Presidential nominee on May 21, 2011. He is a businessman and radio host who experienced a host of controversies throughout the lifespan of his campaign. His campaign was fairly short-lived, but received a great deal of media coverage. He approached issues with a common-sense approach, but was criticized for “struggling to provide clear, substantive answers on issues outside his areas of expertise,” (“Assessing Cain’s Chances”). Cain is the former chief executive of the Godfather’s Pizza chain, which gave him fiscal credibility within the Republican Party because of his strong business background (Wyatt).

Cain is affiliated with the Tea Party and ran as a Washington outsider. He spent a brief stint as the front-runner in the race for the Republican Party nomination, but quickly fell from that position. Cain finished seventh in the New Hampshire Straw Poll, fifth in the Iowa Straw Poll, and first in the Republican presidential straw poll in Florida. His last significant win was at the straw poll in Florida in late September, but he stayed in the campaign a few months longer (Rutenberg and Shear).

During a rally on October 15, 2011, Cain extrapolated on his initial comment about the lethal electric fence that made it even more racialized and violent. He said, “And there’s going to be a sign on the other side saying, ‘It will kill you – Warning’.” He later added that the sign would be written in both English and Spanish. The Monday after making the comment, he claimed that it was a joke, but reiterated his support for a fence that “might be electrified,” (Bingham). He told CNN’s John King that he was serious about the comment and said, “I’m not walking away from that,” (Bingham).

Beyond criticism based upon the content of his statements, Cain was also criticized for using debates, television appearances, and a bus tour to promote his book, “This is Herman Cain!



Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

My Journey to the White House,” rather than to promote his presidential bid. He seemed more focused upon making a name for himself and selling books than being genuinely interested in becoming a legitimate candidate. Critics said his organizational strategy was not strong enough to win the early contests despite the name recognition he received through his book and other stints such as his “Cain Train” YouTube video that went viral at the start of his campaign (“Assessing Cain’s Chances”). He utilized catchy advertisement in his 9-9-9 economic plan to simplify the United States tax code and was a proponent of a Chilean model for privatizing social security and retirement (Weiner).

Cain received a great deal of media coverage because of his affinity for the outrageous, regularly coming out with comments that qualify as outrage language. He called President Obama’s economic policy “bullshit” and said that Planned Parenthood’s purpose was to “help kill black babies before they came into the world,” (Weiner). Cain holds hard-line conservative stances on social issues, especially immigration, and is supportive of massive federal government cuts. These views helped him win votes in the early conservative straw-polls, but ultimately took him off the list of viable candidates for the Presidency due to lack of electability at the national level (Rutenberg and Shear).

Cain has a history of making statements against racial and ethnic groups that he later is called on to clarify. Not only has he made comments about the Hispanic community, but Cain also made statements that “communities should have the right to ban mosque and that he would not be comfortable with a Muslim in his cabinet,” (Weiner).

Cain lost momentum as quickly as he gained it. Several women accused him of sexual harassment and another accused him of partaking in a thirteen-year extramarital affair. It took Cain ten days to respond to the sexual harassment allegations, and in his response he claimed no

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

knowledge of the women, their allegations, or the settlements they received from the National Restaurant Association, the group he was the head of during the time of the allegations. When Ginger White accused him of partaking in extramarital sexual relations, Cain made a statement on national television about the claims before White made any official appearances. Although both Cain and his wife denied the accusations, he eventually suspended his campaign on December 3, 2011 (Summers and Haberman). Cain's target voter base was Tea Party supporters and individuals who place a large importance on family values. These alleged indiscretions were enough to hurt his campaign to the point that he dropped out of the race.

### **Herman Cain Content Analysis Results**

My coding of the Herman Cain articles was slightly more complicated than the previous two. My search terms were "Cain" and "electric fence". When searching the Spanish-language newspapers, it proved much more difficult to clarify my search terms to find the articles I was aiming for. I eventually ended up with "Cain" and "muro electrificado". I searched within the same 15-month period as in the previous codings from the beginning of January 2011 until the time of my coding, which was March 2012. During this timeframe, Cain announced, ran, and eventually suspended his campaign. The timeframe includes the entire run of his campaign and all of the controversies that took place during his bid for the Republican presidential nomination. Most significant to my thesis, Herman Cain made the comment about the lethal electric fence on October 15, 2011, and this timeframe allowed for coverage of the lead-up to the comment, the comment itself, and the aftermath.

The Herman Cain searches turned up significantly less articles than the previous topics. I ended up with 18 from the *New York Times*, 13 from the *Miami Herald*, 3 from the *LA Times*, 7 from *El Diario La Prensa*, 7 from *El Nuevo Herald*, and 3 from *La Opinion*. I ended up coding a

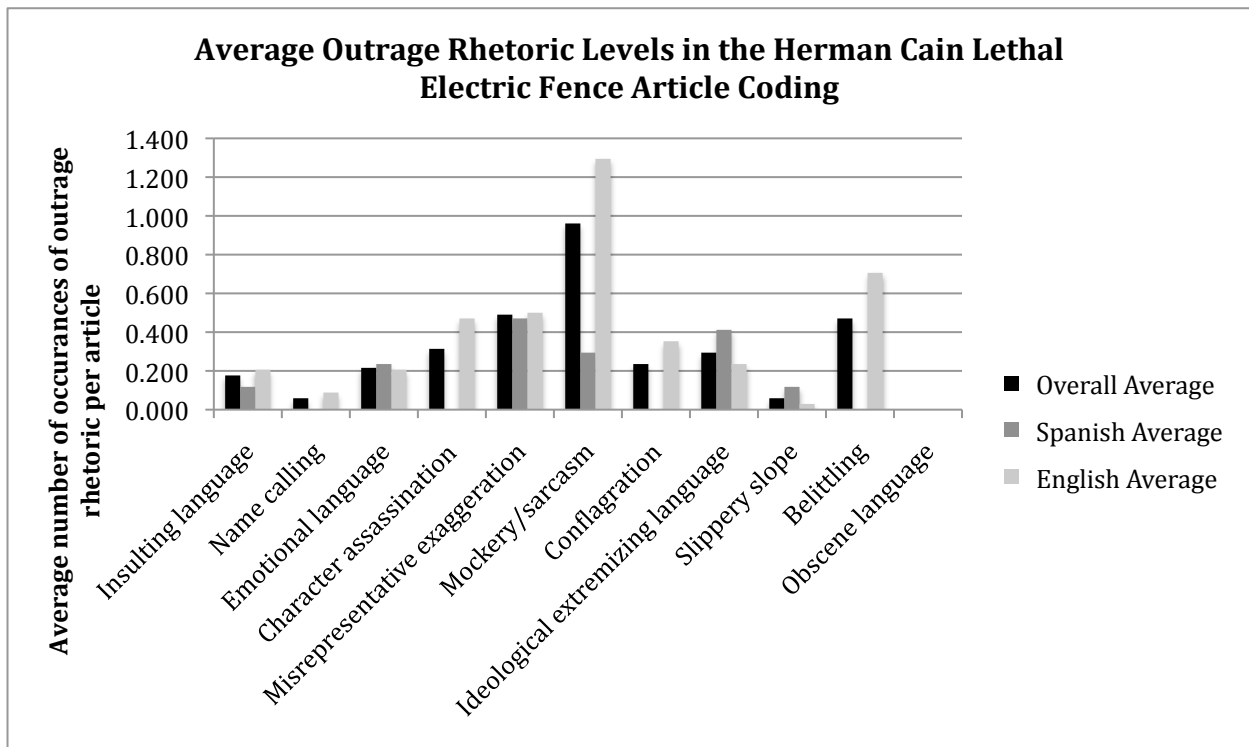
Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

total of 51 articles; 34 articles from English-language newspapers and 17 articles from Spanish-language newspapers. There were far fewer articles covering Herman Cain than either SB 1070 or The Dream Act. This may be because people did not take Herman Cain seriously as a candidate for the Republican nomination. There were significantly less articles about the comment in Spanish-language newspapers than the English-language newspapers, which may be indicative of the Spanish-speaking community in particular not respecting Cain as a candidate. Although Cain's electric fence comment was extremely anti-Hispanic, the Spanish-language newspapers not covering the comment in depth may signify that the Spanish-speaking community was not taking his campaign and candidacy seriously. Because the newspapers are beholden to their clientele, it makes sense that if the Hispanic community was not interested in even acknowledging Cain as a viable candidate that even his most outrageous anti-immigrant comments would not be intensely covered by the Spanish-language newspapers.

Although there were not a high number of articles written about Herman Cain's comment, there was about two and a half times more outrage rhetoric used in the English-language articles than in the Spanish-language articles. The average for instances of outrage rhetoric used in a Spanish-language article was 1.4 instances whereas it was 3.9 instances in an English-language article. The average usage within my entire Herman Cain content analysis was 3 instances per article. These rates of outrage rhetoric are higher than both the Dream Act and SB 1070 content analyses. This extremely high rate of outrage rhetoric may have been due to the sentiment of the comment. While both SB 1070 and the Dream Act have potential to influence the lives of many Hispanics, neither is as outwardly and explicitly racist and dehumanizing as Cain's comment. Threatening death by electrocution is an inhumane manner. It brings up sentiments of the death penalty, an extremely controversial issue in this country. Because of

these sentiments, it makes sense that the articles about this topic include the most amount of outrage rhetoric of the three topics on which I conducted my content analysis.

Table 5: Average Outrage Rhetoric Levels in the Herman Cain Lethal Electric Fence Article Coding



As Table 5 shows, the highest types of outrage language used in both the Anglo and Hispanic newspapers were mockery and sarcasm, belittling, and misrepresentative exaggeration. These three types of outrage language ranking highest for the candidate topic are not surprising because they are aimed at the individual. It is much easier to make a mockery of an individual rather than a piece of legislation. For example, in an article by Marc Caputo in the *Miami Herald* from October 19, 2011, Caputo writes, “They’ve been searching for more candidates like serial daters,” and “If the Republican presidential race were a logic problem, there would be just two

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

candidates: Mitt Romney and Not Mitt Romney. And that's bad news for Herman Cain," (Caputo). Cain is the target of the sarcasm and belittling, whereas in the SB 1070 and the Dream Act articles, the target of the outrage language was an individual rather than the piece of legislation.

The fact that Cain is a candidate rather than a piece of legislation corresponds with the type of language used. That difference lent itself to more instances of outrage language when the topic is an individual because it is easier to make personal and pointed attacks. While people find issue with the racist aspects of a bill, people are much more vitriolic when they feel personally attacked by an individual. There is a character that can be pinpointed and feel personally wronged by. Feeling like an insult is coming from one human being to another is much more targeted than a piece of legislation being racist. It is also easier to target one individual for their beliefs rather than a group of people who wrote a law.

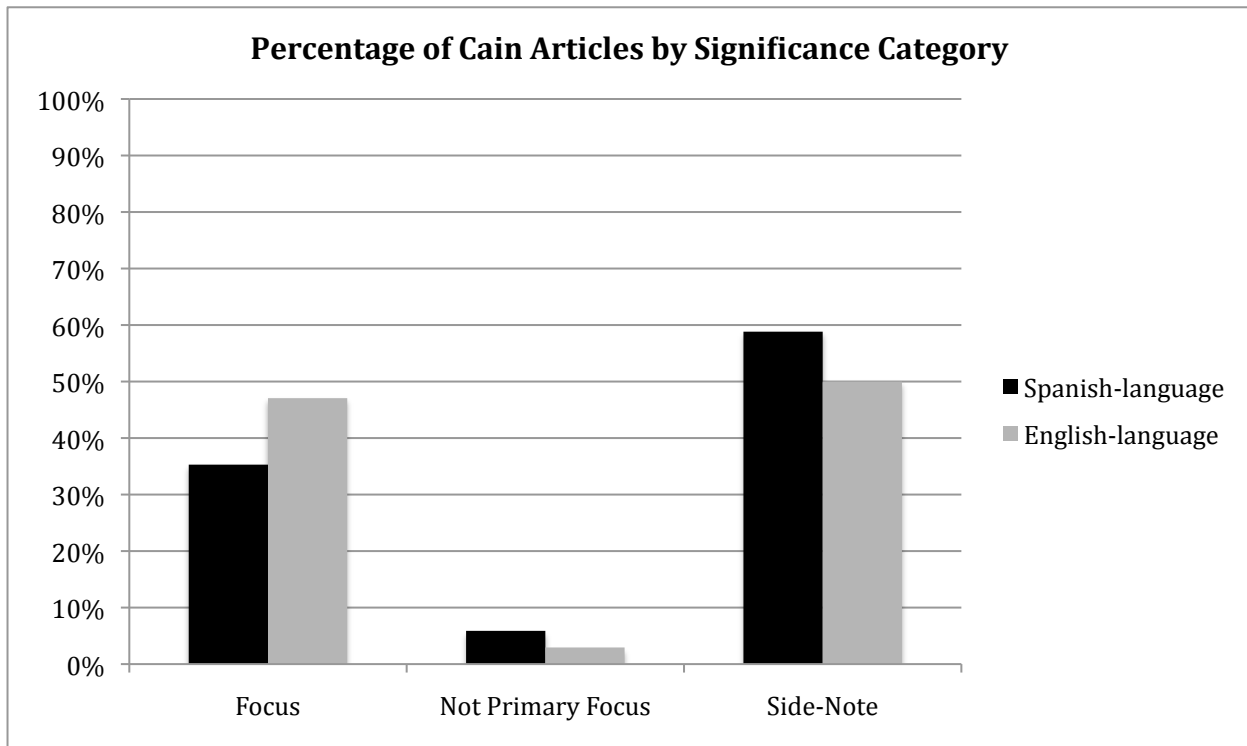
These results reflect the tone of the GOP nomination process for the 2012 election cycle which included a high frequency of personal attacks. Not only were the campaign ads negative, but also the debates and personal appearances became extremely nasty with outrage rhetoric being the focus rather than the issues. The cable news talk shows focused upon instances of candidates misspeaking rather than their substantive views on issues. The candidates themselves came up with catchy names for their political plans such as Cain's 9-9-9 plan. It appeared that the marketing of their personalities and positions was more thought out than the substance and content. It became a race of multiple personalities and each candidate was a character rather than a potential next President of the United States. It seemed as though there was a different front-runner every week, but the race remained devoid of a serious front-runner and serious candidate. Citizens viewed the race as a sporting event rather than a serious political event, and that

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

environment allowed for much more outrage rhetoric and may in fact have encouraged an increase in outrage language.

Instances of outrage rhetoric were higher in this topic than either of the other two, even in Spanish-language newspapers. This is interesting because it may signify that outrage rhetoric is used more frequently towards individuals rather than issues. Also, it may be due to the fact that the Cain topic was dealing solely with an election cycle and the debates, public appearances, and other campaign events that are involved in that timeframe. Elections are environments of competition and therefore open themselves up to more outrage rhetoric by their nature than does a piece of legislation. The nature of the campaign environment is an extremely personal and competitive environment in which attacking a candidate is more likely under this category more so than tearing apart a bill for all its flaws.

*Table 6: Percentage of Cain Articles by Significance Category*



The Spanish-language articles were coded as: 6 focus, 1 not primary focus, and 10 side-note articles. The English-language newspaper articles on the other hand were coded as: 16 focus, 1 not primary focus, and 17 side-note. *Table 6* shows that both language newspapers had around half of the articles categorized as being focused mainly on the issue and the other half as side-notes, but not many as not primary focus. This is interesting in the fact that it is a very different breakdown than both the SB 1070 coding and the Dream Act coding. This may be due to the fact that this coding is dealing with a specific candidate and event rather than a piece of legislation. The majority of the articles were either focus articles or side-note articles, signifying that the articles were either completely focused upon the comment itself or simply mentioned it in passing. It is interesting that there were no in-between articles coded as not primary focus because it is not a topic that can be discussed in a significant way but not at great lengths. This

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

may be due to the fact that people cannot talk about such an emotionally charged topic without delving into the subject at a much deeper level.

The breakdown for the story category is fairly similar across the language divide. Of the Spanish-language articles, there were 16 candidate and 1 op-ed. Of the English-language articles, there were 30 candidate and 4 local color stories. It is obvious why the majority of the stories focused upon campaign issues seeing as the topic is a candidate running for the Presidency.

I observed that the Spanish-language newspapers focused predominantly on analyzing Cain's strategic positions in the presidential race, and the implications and impact of his statement about the electric fence amongst Hispanic voters. The Spanish-language newspapers were generally very objective in their analyses, and rarely included any outrage rhetoric, even while quoting the candidates and other political actors. The English-language newspapers tended to vary their objectivity more broadly. The *New York Times* often included a level of objectivity similar to the Spanish-language newspapers in its analysis, but often planted outrage rhetoric in the form of quotes from candidates and commentators, and occasionally from the writers themselves. The writers at the Miami Herald, by contrast, were particularly liberal and explicit in their use of outrage rhetoric, regularly infusing coverage of political developments with their own sardonic commentary. The Miami Herald also had a tendency toward fatalism, drawing broad conclusions and generalizations, often in the titles of its articles.

Interestingly, Cain appeared more often as a side-note in the Miami Herald, which tended to focus on the race, the candidates, or the party as a whole. In the New York Times articles, Cain appeared as the article's focus twice as often than as a side-note, indicating that the Times focused more closely on the candidate individually than as compared to his competitors.



Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

The English-language articles were longer than the Spanish-language articles. The breakdown of Spanish-language articles were: 5 articles less than 500 words, 22 articles between 501 and 1000 words, and 7 articles longer than 1000 words. The breakdown of English-language articles were: 6 articles less than 500 words, 8 articles between 501 and 1000 words, and 3 articles longer than 1000 words.

#### **Chapter 4: Overall Findings and Implications**

Through my content analysis, I came to several conclusions: the use of outrage rhetoric sensationalizes personalities and characters rather than focusing on the substantive issue; English- and Spanish-language newspapers both cover immigration using outrage tactics, but utilizing different types of outrage rhetoric based on their readers' preferences and outlook on the immigration issue; the subject of the article being a political personality versus legislation results in more outrage language used; and Spanish-language newspaper coverage of immigration issues is more humane and emotionally invested than English-language newspaper coverage which is more detached.

My findings indicate that outrage rhetoric favors personal attacks rather than focusing on substantive issues. Outrage language is a tool of distraction that detracts from the substantive discussion about an issue and shifts focus on to individuals and personalities, diminishing true debate over the issue. This distracts from the topic at hand and changes the subject to a sensationalized shadow of the issue at hand. Because outrage language elicits an emotional response rather than a logical response, it makes sense that the coverage would be more sensationalized than fact based. Outrage language causes people to become emotionally invested in the issue because of the language itself, not because of an actual cost or benefit to them; it plays on the reader's emotions rather than their logic or reason. The coverage using this type of rhetoric creates an environment of individualized attacks and focus on personalities and characters rather than the issue itself. During election years, outrage language occurs at an especially high level in environments like debates where candidates are grouped together and directly attack one another. These quotes are then reprinted in the media as indications of a candidate's strength or potential for election.

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

Both Anglo and Hispanic newspapers use outrage rhetoric tactics, but English-language newspapers include more outrage rhetoric when discussing immigration issues than do Spanish-language newspapers. This is due to the communities the newspapers serve and the issues they care about. Because newspapers are for-profit enterprises, they are beholden to the interests and beliefs of their readership. The newspapers choose and publish their stories based on economic rationales and incentives. As such, they are beholden to the expectations and attitudes of their readership both in terms of the stories they choose, and the tone in which the stories are written about. If a paper's readership expects a topic to be written about in a certain manner, it is logical, in an economic sense, for the paper to match that expectation.

In the case of Hispanic and Anglo newspapers, this means that the Spanish-language newspapers use less outrage rhetoric when dealing with immigration issues because the Hispanic community is much more personally tied and sensitive to those issues than is the Anglo community. While the same outrage tactics are used in both Anglo and Hispanic newspapers, the lower incidence of outrage rhetoric used in the Spanish-language newspapers makes sense because the readership might expect the topic to be covered more objectively, seriously, and without using distorting sensationalism. In this way, outrage language is used to distort a topic's treatment based on reader attitudes.

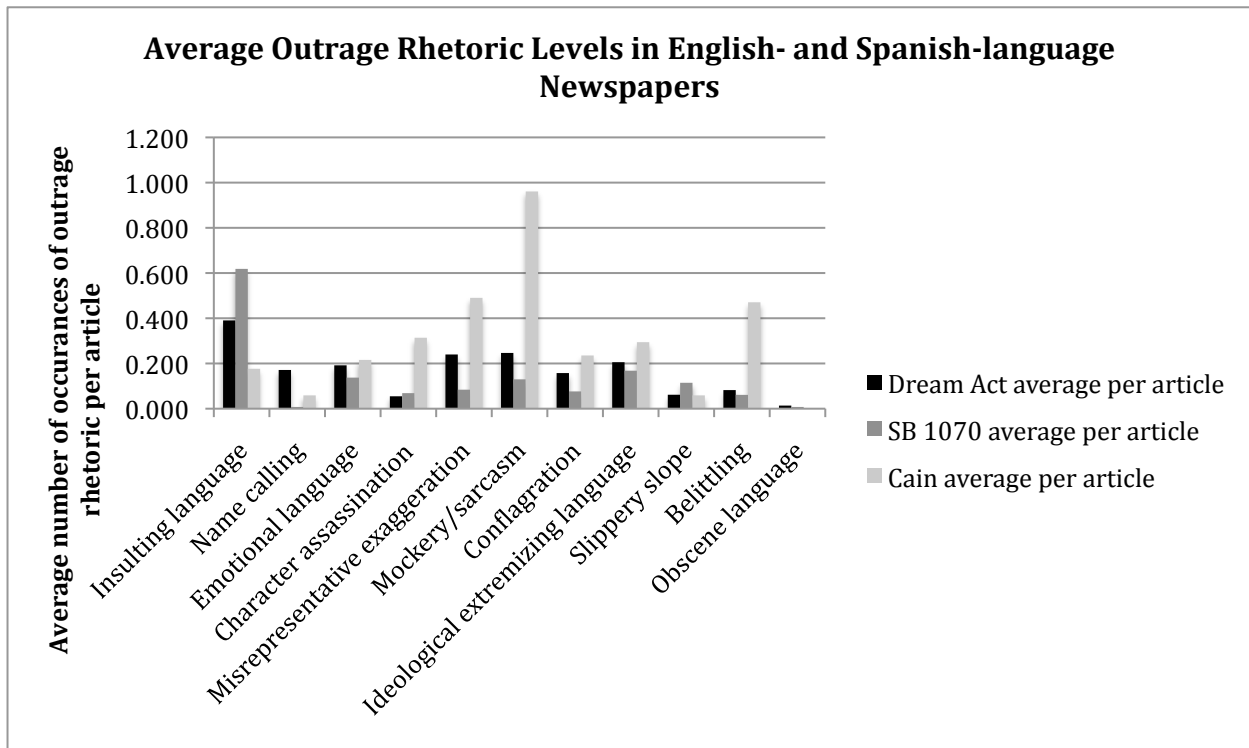
Within my content analysis, two of the subjects were pieces of legislation and one was a comment made by a political personality. The different story type breakdown of non-candidate stories reflects the different ways issues are treated with or without emotional investment between two communities. When the subject of the article was a political personality versus legislation, it allowed for more outrage language to be used. Even though one of the pieces of

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

legislation was a state bill and the other was a national bill, both had the potential to affect a national audience and therefore were both similarly important.

The outrage rhetoric used when discussing a political personality was much more pointed in its personal attacks using belittling, mockery and sarcasm, and misrepresentative exaggeration. Individuals are more easily targeted for outrage language, as they can more easily be sensationalized, cast as extremists, mocked, belittled, or insulted than a piece of legislation. The number one type of rhetoric used in both the Dream Act and SB 1070 content analyses was insulting language, which is a much more basic generalized type of rhetoric. For the SB 1070 coding, ideological extremizing language was also one of the most frequent types of outrage rhetoric used which is indicative of the differing opinions on the issue split along party lines. The different topics experienced different types of outrage language; individuals experienced far more mockery, belittling, and character assassination whereas legislation experienced more insulting language and slippery slope rhetoric.

*Table 7: Average Outrage Rhetoric Level in English- and Spanish-language Newspapers*



The overall results of the outrage rhetoric breakdown between the eleven categories of rhetoric I coded for within all of the articles in my content analysis is shown in *Table 7*. It shows the breakdown between the Dream Act, SB 1070, and the Herman Cain articles. It is apparent that the two topics focusing on legislation had much more similar outrage language breakdowns than did the topic focusing on a candidate.

*Table 8: Average Outrage Rhetoric Levels in Spanish-language Newspapers*

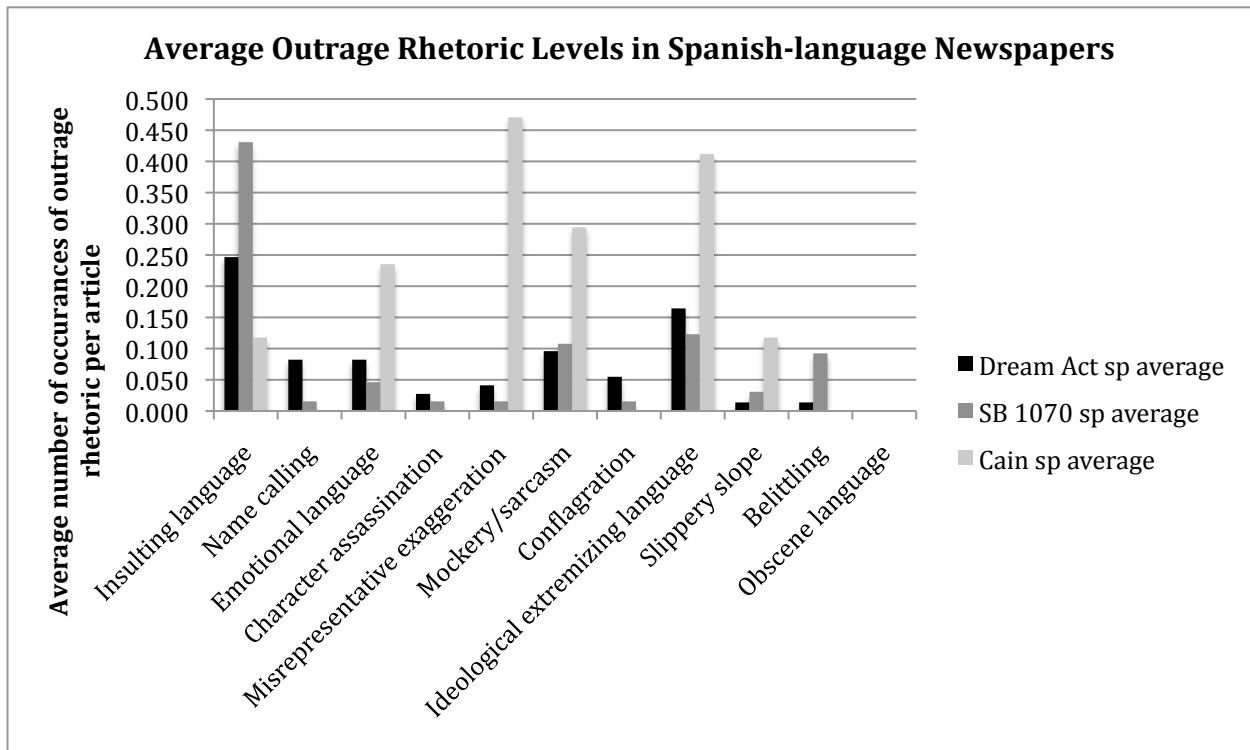
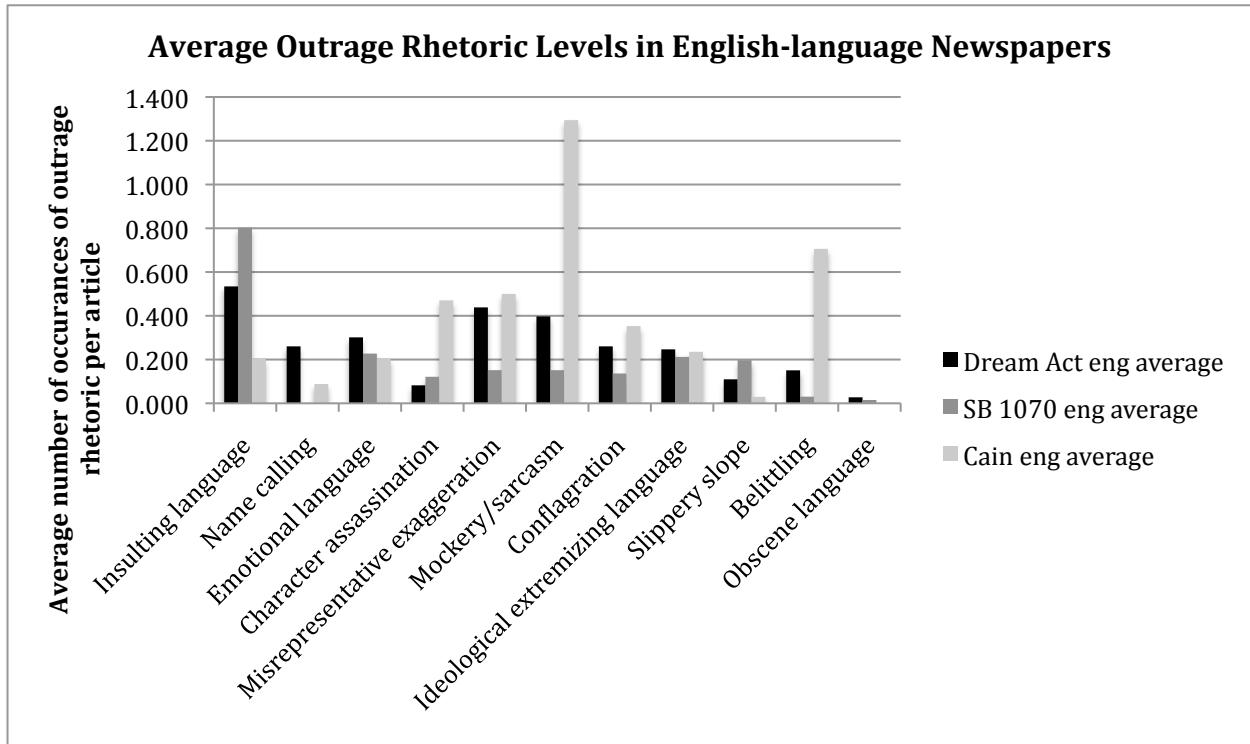


Table 8 shows the outrage rhetoric breakdown between the eleven categories of rhetoric I coded for within just the Spanish-language articles in my content analysis. It shows the breakdown between the Dream Act, SB 1070, and the Herman Cain articles. Again, it is apparent that the two topics focusing on legislation had much more similar outrage levels than did the topic focusing on a candidate. It is also apparent that in most categories, the Cain articles have much higher levels of outrage than did the articles dealing with legislation.

Table 9: Average Outrage Rhetoric Levels in English-language Newspapers



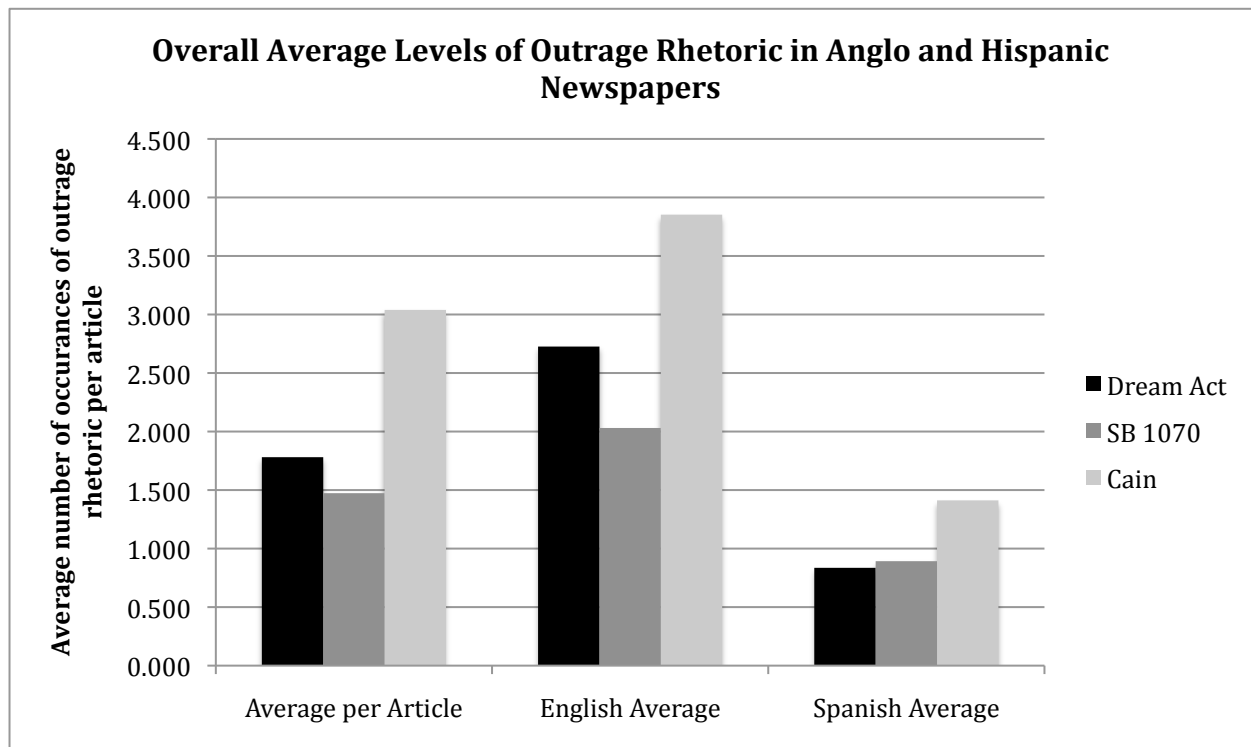
*Table 9* shows the outrage rhetoric breakdown between the eleven categories of rhetoric I coded for within just the English-language articles in my content analysis. It shows the breakdown between the Dream Act, SB 1070, and the Herman Cain articles. Once again, it is apparent that the two topics focusing on legislation had much more similar outrage levels than did the topic focusing on a candidate. The Cain articles continue to have much higher levels of outrage than did the articles dealing with legislation. It is interesting to note that the articles in *Table 9* have between two and three times as much outrage rhetoric as do the articles in *Table 8*, reiterating that the English-language articles have more outrage rhetoric than the Spanish-language articles.

Spanish-language newspaper coverage of immigration issues is more humane and emotionally invested than English-language newspaper coverage which is more detached. This occurs because of the same logic that newspapers are beholden to their readership. Communities

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

and individuals read what they want to read. In general, people want their opinions and ideas to be reflected in their media. With so many different media sources, newspapers are driven by their profit-structures to write what people will read otherwise readers will go elsewhere for their news. The Hispanic community expects immigration issues to be discussed in a way that is sympathetic and emotionally invested because they are deeply invested in those issues. The Anglo community is more emotionally detached from immigration issues, and therefore expects the issues to be covered without bias and in a purely journalistic way. The difference in tone is dictated by the newspaper's loyalty to their readership.

*Table 10: Overall Average Levels of Outrage Rhetoric in Spanish-language and English-language Newspapers*





Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

*Table 10* shows even more drastically the differences in outrage levels between the three topics and the different language newspapers. The Cain articles have the overall highest levels of outrage rhetoric of any of the topics in all areas. The Dream Act articles have the next highest levels of outrage rhetoric, but are slightly below the SB 1070 articles in Spanish-language newspapers. The SB 1070 articles have the lowest overall levels of outrage rhetoric, but they still have an average of 1.5 instances of outrage per article.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

Through my findings about outrage rhetoric mentioned in the previous section, I have come to several conclusions about the topic as a whole and potential future research.

My main finding was that the use of outrage rhetoric sensationalizes personalities and characters rather than focusing on the substantive topic issue. Within that broad finding, I found several interesting things: English- and Spanish-language newspapers both cover immigration using outrage tactics, but utilizing different types of outrage rhetoric, due to readership preference and outlook on the immigration issue; the subject of the article being a political personality versus legislation allows for more outrage language to be used; and Spanish-language newspaper coverage of immigration issues is more humane and emotionally invested than English-language newspaper coverage which is more detached.

In the future it would be interesting to see whether these findings occur strictly in print media, specifically in newspapers, or whether these findings occur in different types of media as well. I assume there are slight differences in cable news shows and other broadcast media because I took two types of outrage language out of my coding since they lend themselves to broadcast media rather than written media. I would guess that verbal sparring and emotional displays would occur at rates in broadcast media similar to the rates of emotional language and obscene language in print media because of their similar characteristics. Also, because of the nature of certain types of broadcast media such as cable talk shows, I assume the overall levels of outrage language in those types of programs would be higher than the outrage levels I recorded in newspapers because of the nature of the news venue. Typically, cable talk shows are not considered hard and fast news whereas newspapers are still expected to produce unbiased journalism. Many cable talk shows are so engrained in the infotainment industry that they are

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

acknowledged for their biases. In order to look at a more unbiased source that parallels my study more closely, I would likely look at local and national news programs. It would also be interesting to look at radio shows, blogs, and other sources of news. Through these different research projects, it would be intriguing to see whether there are differences in other types of language between written and broadcast media as well.

It is also interesting to look at whether or not anti-immigrant rhetoric by the GOP is detrimental to their ability to attract the Hispanic vote and how they are currently talking about immigrants and immigration. The growing Hispanic population affects the current political atmosphere. This gives implications as to how outrage language has the potential to affect the political atmosphere at a much deeper level than it already does because of the increase in population of this group. I assume the GOP will change their strategy in talking about Hispanics in order to avoid this.

It is fairly obvious that the anti-immigrant rhetoric causes Hispanics to vote less frequently for the GOP, but the impact of the English- and Spanish-language media coverage of this rhetoric may potentially affect the groups within the Hispanic population differently. A follow-up study to my own that looks at pre-election levels of outrage language focused on candidates, candidate stories, the election, debates, and other campaign related articles as well as the impact on the Hispanic vote in the primaries and general election would be interesting to further explore this question. If higher amounts of outrage rhetoric dealing with immigration issues caused a lower vote share for the Republican candidate, that would help confirm and build on the results of my study.

Another area for further study is an investigation into a similar dynamic to corroborate my findings. I could look at anti-Arab/Muslim rhetoric in mainstream and Arab media as it

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

relates to Al-Qaeda and Taliban foreign and domestic attacks. Another potential in this area would be looking at rhetoric surrounding the rise of the idea of a 'war on women' in mainstream media compared to publications and programs focused on or aimed towards women.

The strongest aspects of my analysis were my findings on the higher levels of outrage rhetoric in English-language newspapers than in Spanish-language newspapers when looking at immigration issues. Someone with the time and money could expand on my study by looking at whether or not this finding remains true dealing with other social or economic issues other than immigration and whether it remains true in other types of Anglo and Hispanic media. While conducting my research, I became very interested in what the rhetoric dealing with immigration from other media sources, such as Twitter, Facebook, and blogs, looked like. It would be interesting to somehow look at the most re-tweeted, reposted, and trending topics on Twitter and Facebook dealing with immigration. I assume the rhetoric on social networks and blogs would be much different than in the newspapers that I coded. They would likely be more personal and have more outrage rhetoric than the traditional media forms.

If I had a chance to do this study again, I would likely include newspapers from Arizona and a state in the Midwest. It would be interesting to see if there were different perspectives or levels of outrage in different parts of the country. Also, I would include another topic dealing with a candidate issue in order to further explore the outcomes I proposed.

Through my research, I have learned that outrage rhetoric sensationalizes personalities rather than focusing on the substantive issue. I think this negatively affects the Hispanic community because it does not allow for significant discussion of immigration issues across all communities. Society as a whole is shown the issue in a sensationalized way that detracts from substantive discussion about the positive and negative impacts and implications of the issue. For

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

immigration, an interest of a major demographic in the United States is degraded. Instead of discussing a sound and secure policy for national immigration, focus instead is put upon who can be the most ideologically extreme. It is turned into a competition of who can be toughest on the issue rather than who can come up with the best solution to the problem.

In the future, I foresee this topic becoming more outrage prone rather than less so. The current political climate encourages stark partisanship. The profit driven structure of the news and infotainment industry is conflagrating the issue. There is a positive feedback loop with political actors who are prone to using outrage language because the more outrage language that political actors use, the more media coverage they receive, which means further dissemination of outrage language to the population and the more people watch networks that disseminate outrage rhetoric. There is a symbiotic relationship in this cycle. It is a slippery slope of the environment becoming more and more extreme. For the sake of constructive discourse in the United States, it is critical that parties move away from outrage language and towards rational and sound policy discussion.

I believe that outrage language will negatively affect the political discourse and continue to be more and more heated. This will make the discussions even less substantive and more attack prone. The implications and consequences of this are even more partisan separation and lack of compromise in our political system. Without finding a remedy to this situation and lowering the levels of outrage rhetoric in our political discourse, the possibility of a more civil political environment that creates substantive policy for the United State is severely unlikely.

## **Appendix**

Below are thumbnail descriptions defined by Professors Sobieraj and Berry that focus on the underlying concept that I attempted to measure. The codebook has fuller definitions along with a range of examples of speech that fall within the boundaries of each of these.

### *Variable Descriptions:*

#### **Insulting Language**

This variable is intended to measure whether the author or speaker uses insulting language in reference to a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party, or other organization, or their behaviors, planned behaviors, policies, or views. For example, “asinine” in reference to a person or group’s behavior is insulting language, but if the person or group is called “asinine,” reserve this for the “name calling” variable.

#### **Name Calling**

A measurement of whether the author or speaker engages in name calling in reference to a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party or other organization. Affectionate, light-hearted teasing should be weeded out. Rather, name-calling language is characterized by word and context that make the subject look foolish, inept, hypocritical, deceitful, or dangerous.

#### **Emotional Display**

This variable should capture audio and/or visual emotional displays in reference to a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party or other organization (or their behaviors, planned behaviors, policies, or views). In printed text, such as that in blog posts or on web pages, it is unlikely to appear often, but would most likely be communicated through

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

“shouting” via the deliberate use of all caps, multiple exclamation points, enlarged text, and so on. Emotional display is about the form of expression. See “emotional language” for emotional content, although the two will often present concurrently and in such cases each is to be noted.

### **Emotional Language**

This variable is intended to measure instances where the author or speaker engages in verbal or written expressions of emotion in reference to a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party or other organization. Emotion words related to anger, fear, and sadness are key indicators. Emotional language is about the literal content of what is said or written, rather than how it is communicated.

### **Verbal Fighting/Sparring**

This code is for aggressive jousting between speakers. In radio and television it may take the form of dismissive interruptions or rude exchanges between guests/callers or between hosts and guests/callers characterized by a lack of civility

### **Character Assassination**

Does the author or speaker attempt to damage the reputation of a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party, or other organization by slander or misrepresentation of their views, motives, or behaviors? In politics, questioning the veracity of a statement is common, and should not be confused with character assassination, which is more extreme. Saying someone was not honest in a reply to a journalist is not character assassination, but saying that someone is a liar who can not be trusted does constitute character assassination. These are ad hominem attacks.

### **Misrepresentative Exaggeration**

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

This measurement documents whether the author or speaker engages in very dramatic negative exaggeration in reference to the behaviors, planned behaviors, policies, or views of a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party, or other organization, such that it significantly misrepresents or obscures the truth.

### **Mockery**

This variable was designed to measure whether the author or speaker makes fun of the behaviors, planned behaviors, policies, or views of a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party or other organization to make the subject look bad or to rally others in criticism of the subject. Affectionate, light-hearted teasing should be weeded out. Instead, the focus centers on humor that is used to make the subject look foolish, inept, hypocritical, deceitful, or dangerous. It might also come in the form of a physical impersonation intended to make others laugh at the expense of the subject (think Tina Fey).

### **Conflagration**

Coding for this variable records attempts to escalate non-scandals into scandals. The key trait is speech that overstates or dramatizes the importance or implications of minor gaffes, oversights, or improprieties. By non-scandal we refer to an episode, event, or trend that a learned, dispassionate observer would not consider significant or scandalous.

### **Ideologically Extremizing Language**

The reference here is to extremist language used to critically describe a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party or other organization or their behaviors, planned behaviors, policies, or views. Usually the descriptive language will be used as an implicit slur rather than as simple description.

### **Slippery Slope**



Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

This is intended to capture fatalistic arguments, which suggest that some behavior, policy, or decision is a small step that will inevitably pave the way for much more extreme behaviors, policies, or decisions.

### **Belittling**

When an author or speaker belittles or demeans a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party or other organization (or their behaviors, planned behaviors, policies, or views), the appropriate coding category is “belittling.” This may be done in the context of mockery or exaggeration.

### **Obscene Language**

This gauges use of obscene language in reference to a person, group of people, branch of the government, political party or other organization (or their behaviors, planned behaviors, policies, or views). Here we mean words that are not used on network television (as a general rule), not simply insulting words. If the obscene language is used concretely to name call, code under “name calling.”

Miller, Sara A.  
Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

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Senior Honors Thesis  
April 14, 2012

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