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Selling Themselves to the Public: How Successful Female Entertainers in Early Twentieth-Century Vaudeville Took Control of Their Professional Careers

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For people living during the boom of the Roaring Twenties and the bust of the Dirty Thirties, attending live entertainment shows served as a way to enjoy the good life or hide from the harsh realities of disasters like the Great Depression and Dust Bowl. Vaudeville, which reached its Golden Age during this period, was a form of live variety show that began in New York City theaters then, as it gained popularity as a family-friendly entertainment, spread quickly throughout the rest of the country by means of competing traveling circuits. Part of Vaudeville's attraction to audiences was the talented, and sometimes untalented, female acts. Vaudeville's attraction to its female performers, many of whom preferred applause and excitement to the mundane life of raising families or working in factories, was that it provided them the chance to have rewarding and non-traditional careers. The women who found success in Vaudeville also found that it gave them greater control over their professional careers than other women experienced, including control over the terms of their employment, over their creative freedom and freedom of expression, over their upward mobility within the entertainment industry, and over their movement into and out of the Vaudeville circuits. Other forms of live entertainment at the time did not always provide the same opportunities for women to take control of their lives, and even Vaudeville had some limits, but women who proved their worth, mostly by showing their addition to a playbill would sell tickets, experienced life in a way few others were able.

The first four decades of the twentieth century was a tumultuous time for women in American history. Middle class women moved out of the domestic sphere and into the public realm and argued their moral and familial duties as the reasons they needed to recreate society in the image they wanted. Some

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of their campaigns were legislatively successful, such as when they won the constitutional right to vote with the 19th Amendment and their temperance movements culminated in Prohibition. Women of lesser means proved just as successful in the work place when they had to fill in during the Great War while still managing their family and home. New women chose to push the boundaries of cultural norms of the Victorian Era by shortening their skirts, learning to drive, and exploring their own sexuality. Women of color were able to express themselves through the arts during the Harlem Renaissance, a movement that was rooted in Harlem, New York, but influenced artists around the country, during the 1920s and 30s. The Harlem Renaissance was characterized by a surge of African American accomplishments in cultural forms of expression such as art, literature, music, and social or intellectual scholarship. This period of American history was not all progressive or completely positive, though. The right to vote only came after women fought for it for many years and they suffered a lot of abuse for their efforts. Women who proved themselves and enjoyed being in the workforce were repeatedly sent back to the kitchen or were restricted to certain "pink collar" positions to make the factory and management jobs available for the men. African American women were given few options outside of domestic service to help support their families. War and depression, separated by only a decade of real and perceived economic growth, meant employment and improvements for women were often unstable.

One genre of work, however, was not confined to the same fluctuations and regulations as many of the other types of work available to women. Live theater entertainment, whether it was the high culture of the opera and Broadway stage plays or the low culture of burlesque and cooch dances, sexually provocative dances where women shimmied and gyrated suggestively, provided women with opportunities they would not have had access to within the traditional work force. Vaudeville, during its height of popularity between 1900 and the early 1930s, was one of several highly accessible forms of popular entertainment that functioned, according to Susan Glenn, as "central institutions of commercial leisure, critical arenas for cultural exploration, and powerful agents of cultural transformation."[1] More directly, it provided female entertainers with control over their professional careers that women in other professions, or even just other forms of public entertainment, rarely enjoyed. They were able to exert control over terms of their employment, including their wages, over their creative freedom and freedom of expression, over their upward mobility within the entertainment industry, and over

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their movement in and out of the Vaudeville circuits.

Vaudeville, a subgenre of theater entertainment, was a popular form of variety show that was formalized as a separate style of entertainment from concert saloons, variety halls, burlesques, revues, and proper theater in the early 1880s. Owners, like B. F. Keith who controlled most of Vaudeville at one point, and the managers that worked for them began trying to class the shows up a little to attract the growing middle-class audience with a special interest in doubling business by including women and children as paying customers. One way they attracted this new audience was by creating line-ups that included a variety of comedy, theater, music, and acrobatic acts that ranged from high culture to low culture with the majority falling in the middle to appeal to the "average" person. Additionally, the individual acts were required to be clean enough not to offend the women and children who had become a significant part of the target audience.[2] Once the winning combination was found, Vaudeville catapulted into popular culture as a favored source of entertainment until it was displaced by a combination of the hardship of the Great Depression, the introduction of motion pictures, radio, and television, and the rising interest in more sexually explicit forms of entertainment, such as burlesque strip tease shows. During its golden age, in the 1910s and 20s, Vaudeville, compared to other forms of income, was a way for women to have control over their own lives.

For many women, Vaudeville seemed like an escape from the dismal life of poverty, drudgery work, or being controlled by other people. Instead, it provided them opportunities for success based on their own intelligence, skills, and choices they made. This was much different than traditional types of female employment that were incredibly restrictive. According to historian Alice Kessler-Harris, by 1900, governments passed "legally imposed limitations on the kind of work women could do," including "protective" laws that prohibited them from working where alcohol was sold, where grinding or polishing metal took place, or were the job required them to act as messengers.[3] Further, by 1917 there were hour restrictions that forbade women to work at night.[4] Female vaudevillians, whose work made it easy to classify them as cabaret performers or night club dancers, fell into the small group of women who found themselves exempt from these types of regulations.[5] Eva Tanguay, one of Vaudeville's most successful and sought-after female stars, and women like her, embraced the exemption because they found legal regulations concerning their employment more restrictive than protective.

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Tanguay's entertainment career began when she won first place with a song and a dance in a local talent show when she was eight years old. At the age of thirteen, while working in a supporting role for a Broadway play, she learned some lessons that were a critical part of her success in Vaudeville. Those lessons, in the form of welcome advice, were about cultivating a stage presence and building a role around herself and they served her well.[6] Glenn describes this process as an "assertive self-spectacle" that countered the exploitative nature of theatrical producers, predominantly male, and helped changed people's concept of womanhood.[7] The most successful women in Vaudeville, especially those who preferred to perform alone, were the ones who incorporated their own personality in their acts, even when performing as a character. When Tanguay finally figured out how to put her own personality into her performances her career took off. She reached the peak of her career in 1908 and spent the next decade riding out her own "glory days" during Vaudeville's height of popularity.[8]

To be successful in Vaudeville performers had one job, to fill the theater's seats, and for most of her career Tanguay's appearance on the playbills meant sold out shows. At least one show billing declared her "The World's Greatest Eccentric Comedienne" and historian M. Alison Kibler says it was Tanguay's "sensual, frenetic, and often insolent performances" that drew audiences in to see her perform.[9] Tanguay's choice, and skill, to use self-deprecation and satire of high-culture trends, while projecting a sexuality that titillated without offending, made her a hit with both male and female audiences.[10] One of her most famous performances was a satirical rendition of Salome dancing, the most popular being the "Dance of the Seven Veils," traditionally performed as a serious and sensually exotic dance. Tanguay performed her version dressed in a revealing skin-colored outfit decorated with only a few gems. The outfit captured the audience's attention, then she held it with her personal blend of obvious sexuality and comedic dance. According to Douglas Gilbert, Tanguay insisted in an interview that her fame was completely based on her personality (which she cultivated) because "as a matter of fact, I am not beautiful, I can't sing, and I do not know how to dance. I am not even graceful." Gilbert confirmed the accuracy of her assessment.[11] Regardless of why she was popular, her performances always amused audiences. Likewise, another performer named Trixie Friganza used her own hefty weight as the butt of self-deprecating fat jokes to "advance the notion of personal appeal over accepted skill" and challenge ideas that female entertainers should be slim, beautiful, and

talented.[12] By making the choice to embrace their own personalities and own their looks, both women escaped the mundane work of factories or domestic service, distinguishing them from the countless numbers of beautiful chorus girls that never made it big, and catapulted themselves into stardom.

Not all performers were as self-aware about their lack of skills, sometimes the "success" of these performers was based on the superiority theory of humor and came at a cost. This was a rather cruel type of humor where audiences assumed superiority over performers who were unaware that they were actually the butt of a joke. The Cherry Sisters were one such group of entertainers. Billed during their time as the "Worst Act in America," the Cherry Sisters' performances were, according to D. Travis Stewart, "on par with a boating accident" because they lacked charm, wit, and even the ability to sing on key, but did not realize it.[13] A contemporary review of the sisters in *The Odebolt Chronical* described the women as "creatures surpassing the witches in Macbeth in general hideousness" and acknowledged a general audience unruliness during their performance that stopped just shy of pelting the women with vegetables.[14] The reviewer also noted that the sisters truly believe they were providing "entertainment surpassing anything on stage" and blamed their naiveté on exploitive managers who "systematically stuffed [them] with the notion they were way up."[15] Despite the unflattering portrayal of the women, the reviewer admitted to readers that the audience left the show "well satisfied" and that the sisters, who "salted down $60,000 in the bank and purchased several farms with the proceeds of their foolishness," did not fair so poorly themselves.[16] While the experience of the Cherry Sisters was certainly less pleasant than that of Tanguay, their success was enough for them to choose to deal with the abuse and stay in Vaudeville instead of leave and take up a more mundane type of work.

Because success in Vaudeville was linked to an audiences' appreciation of talent, or sometimes a lack of talent, it was not exclusive to any one type of woman. Women from working-class backgrounds, women who immigrated to the United States, or women with non-Anglo phenotypes all had the option to try and become stars in Vaudeville. Tanguay, for example, was born into a poor family that immigrated to the United States via Eastern Canada. Another Vaudeville star, Fanny Brice, was half Jewish and she used her ethnicity in her acts during the 1910s and 1920s, despite growing anti-Semitism after World War I, with great success.[17] Two of her more popular songs were "Second Hand Rose" and "Becky is Back in

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the Ballet." She sang them, and many of her other hits, in a fake Yiddish accent and in both of these songs she referenced Jewish stereotypes. In "Second Hand Rose" she alluded to the idea that Jewish people were either poor and/or cheap and in "Becky is Back in the Ballet" she referenced the "Jewish nose" and the guilt Jewish parents put on their children.[18] Similarly, Aida Overton Walker, a woman of color, made her fame because she did not deny her ethnicity, but embraced it and used it to appeal to the "unconscious, often competing desires in many of her spectators.[19] Much like Tanguay's burlesque of sexuality and Friganza's weight made their own sexuality less objectionable to audiences, women of color were also able to express their own sexuality, through song lyrics or other means, like dance, because black sexuality was of less concern to the primarily white audiences.[20]

Stardom for female vaudevillians came with tangible rewards. Gilbert lists three women, Tanguay, Nora Bayes, and Elsie Janis among Vaudeville's top earners during its golden years.[21] After Tanguay's Salome dance proved to be a hit, she was signed by one of the Vaudeville circuits with a guaranteed salary of $3500 per week, one of the highest wages paid to a Vaudeville performer, man or woman.[22] She is believed to have earned about $2 million dollars over her career, although much of it was spent on gambling or lost in the stock market crash of 1929.[23] Her income after that was enough to let her buy and sell properties, including multiple lots and homes in Burbank and Hollywood, and invest in shares in a theatrical company.[24] Not everyone made as much as Tanguay, but Elsie Janis received one weekly check for $3750, although her average was considerably lower, and Nora Bayes was paid a weekly sum of $2500 during several different tours spanning her career.[25] Stewart writes that during the early and mid-1920s, even entry-level work in Vaudeville paid performers more than many men made working in the factories and established female performers who did twelve minute acts three times a day could make $800 a week.[26] When comparing a career in Vaudeville against a factory job or to the life of a housewife trying to raise a family on a working man's salary, it seems to be a blessing that some women were able to choose a life in entertainment.

Another way Vaudeville provided its female performers with opportunities not available to all working women, even those in other branches of the entertainment field, was through creative freedom and freedom of expression for performers. Women often had creative control over their costuming, stage

settings, what type of persona they wanted to adopt, and who they wanted to work with. Tanguay, for example, was known for the somewhat, unusual, costumes she designed for herself including a dress made out of flags, a dress made of pennies, and several outfits that challenged decency regulations. Famed performers Mae West and Sophie Tucker, among others, both chose to jump on the relatively short-lived craze for black-face acts and coon shouting, an offshoot of black-face where white women sing African American songs in a way that makes fun of African Americans and their vernacular in a highly racist way, as their way of breaking into the Vaudeville circuit. Even lesser-known performers, like Ruth Budd, an aerial acrobat, had creative control over their acts. In fact, they had to in order to keep their place on the circuit because they could very easily be removed and replaced if they did not draw an audience.

Budd began her acrobatic career as part of a team with her younger brother, Giles. As children, she was the older and stronger of the two, so they reversed the traditional gender roles, she did the holding and catching while Giles was flipping and being tossed, and she decided they should wear cross-gendered costumes to emphasize their role reversals.[27] When her brother left the partnership in 1919 due to repeated injuries, Budd adjusted her own act to emphasis her femininity and increase her appeal to audiences instead of trying to find a new male partner. She did this by slowing down her acrobatics and adding comedy, song, and dance to her repertoire.[28] While she never quite achieved the fame of performers like Tanguay, the changes she made meant she was able to keep performing for longer than she would have without them.

In addition to having creative freedom over their acts, women in Vaudeville also used their celebrity as a means of self-expression as well. Budd used her success as a platform to argue in favor of feminism and suffrage. She used own her physical fitness to prove that she hardly needed a man to vote for her or protect her when she was fully capable of picking up and moving around a man twice her weight.[29] Two other women who used their acts in Vaudeville to promote feminist ideas were Olga Petrova and Alla Nazimova. Petrova starred in a play called *Hurricane* in 1923 that touched on the issue of birth control and Nazimova starred in the 1914 short play, *An Unknown Woman*, which called for changes in divorce laws and the 1915 playlet, *War Brides* which called for pacifism in the face of World War I.[30]

Other performers used their status to challenge social norms, especially

those regarding female sexuality. Historian Albert F. McLean, Jr. points out that there was a "gradual relaxation of strict conventional attitudes toward sex can be followed in the career of vaudeville from 1900 through the roaring twenties."[31] Stewart continues that argument further, saying that Vaudeville was a "modernist" form of entertainment that kept up with the times and describing it as the "peak of progressive liberalism for its day."[32] Eva challenged the system by dancing on stage in a bathing suit, singing songs with suggestive titles, like "It's All Been Done Before but Not the Way I Do It," and using her song "I Don't Care" to tell people she was too independent, clever, and famous to care about what anybody thought of her or what she does.[33] After a conversation with song writer Fred Fisher, that included him describing her as "big and guaky," Sophie Tucker realized that her brand of sexuality was non-threatening to audiences and she quickly became a master of the *double-entendre* song. In her autobiography, she claimed that "damn few singers…have what it takes to put [a *double-entendre* song] over," but since she was so good at it she determined to always include one in her act. She also routinely sang "hot numbers," comedic songs about sex that "left the audience laughing their heads off," even when management asked her to leave them out of her performances.[34]

      Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, a blues singer that originated in the Harlem Renaissance, also used her music to challenge social norms and call attention so social problems, many of them unique to the African American experience. Most of her performances were on the Black Vaudeville circuit, run by white men who created the Theater Owners Booking Association (T.O.B.A.), but her performances were attended by both black and white audiences. Where main-stream white singers were unable to address sex directly, relying on double-entendre and jokes to broach the topic, Rainey's lyrics were more matter of fact, explicitly addressing things like physical sexuality in extramarital relationships, the connection between sex and violence that appeared in African American relationships, and the "provocative and pervasive imagery" of both hetero- and homosexuality.[35] The song "Barrel House Blues" includes the lyric, "Papa likes his outside women, mama likes her outside men," which would be an affront to women who knew their men were cheating but were restrained by society from doing the same.[36] Her "Prove it on Me Blues," with lines like "they must've been women, 'cause I don't like no men" and "ain't nobody caught me" were a challenge to both heterosexual society and a legal system that persecuted homosexual relationships.[37]

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In addition to giving women creative freedom and self-expression, Vaudeville also provided women with opportunities for artistic recognition and to cultivate control and positions of authority for themselves. Rainey, for example, wrote many of her own hit songs, including "Prove it on Me Blues." Olga Petrova not only starred in the play *Hurricane*, but she wrote it and two other plays that all were performed in Vaudeville circuits.[38] Mae West's career was similar- she was a star on the stage and wrote and produced plays from behind it. One thing all of these women had in common was that they openly took credit for their work as writers, producers, and managers and used it for their own benefit.

Caroline Caffin, a writer from early in Tanguay's career, was decidedly not a fan of the woman she called an enigma whose popularity contradicted her mussy appearance, irreverence for her audience, and lack of any talent. Yet even she candidly credited Tanguay for being uniquely effective at her own self-promotion. Calling her the "Circe of the Force of Advertising," Caffin candidly, if rancorously, recognized Tanguay's ability to control her own destiny by influencing her audiences rather than being subject to their whims.[39] For some women, taking control over their own lives and success gave them a freedom to exert control in other people's lives.

Rainey, in addition to being a talented performer and song writer, was also a successful Vaudeville troupe manager. During her long career she hired and trained the extras for her acts, worked with choreographers and directors to improve her tour group, Wildcats Jazz Band, and created and ran a group called the Paramount Flappers.[40] Around the same time Rainey was active in Vaudeville so were the Whitman Sisters. Known as the "Royalty of Negro Vaudeville," the sisters were a group of four women whose careers in Vaudeville spanned almost forty-five years and was incredibly successful. They were performers, set designers, choreographers, managers, producers, and owners of what was to become the highest paid troupe under T.O.B.A. Mabel Whitman, the eldest of the sisters, was personally responsible for running and making a success out of several troupes. They were not just a success in Black Vaudeville, though. The sisters and their troupes played theaters in all the major cities and to both black and white audiences with equal success. Over the years the sisters gave hundreds of performers their first break and many went on to success of their own.[41] In a period where women, especially women of color, often had no voice or autonomy, never mind authority, what these women accomplished in Vaudeville was amazing.

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       The last way Vaudeville was a golden opportunity for some women was because it was a very fluid institution. Women in Burlesque or other low culture venues could become more legitimate in Vaudeville and women from Broadway and other high culture venues could use Vaudeville as a stepping stone to retirement or as a place to reinvent themselves. People constantly moved in and out of the Vaudeville circuits and other venues of public entertainment and few, if any, were ever blackballed permanently. Vaudeville was also a place that people from other fields could come and go as they wanted or needed.

       In the early years, when owners and managers like Keith were trying to raise Vaudeville from low to high culture, it was common to bring in stars from the opera or Broadway to be the new headliners. This served the Vaudeville circuit by drawing in the middle-class audience through name recognition.[42] It could also be beneficial to female stars whose careers were failing or whose age made it difficult to find other work because it meant they could still work in the entertainment industry. As Vaudeville became more popular with women and better classes of people and settled into a comfortable spot midway between high and low culture, it began to attract young talent from the other venues. Tanguay's move from the theater to Vaudeville was partially motivated by her desire to leave the chorus because she wanted to avoid the fate of most chorus women. She had no interest in becoming a faceless, sexualized, non-person that faded into the background or ending up married to a millionaire, or anyone for that matter, but wanted to become a wealthy and famous star in her own right.[43] Women from low culture entertainment, like concert saloons or cooch shows, would have considered Vaudeville a major advancement to their career, if fame and a better income were what they wanted. Similarly, Vaudevillians who did not have an act lined up would take an opening in a burlesque show until they got back into a Vaudeville gig.[44] Sophie Tucker would regularly leave Vaudeville, especially at the end of a season, for other work in the entertainment industry. Sometimes she found work outside of the United States, taking her act to the clubs and stages of London, Paris, and Vienna, and Berlin.[45] International travel was another perk enjoyed by successful performers who were not tied down to American Vaudeville.

       In addition to providing women already in the entertainment business better, or at least different, options for employment and income potential, Vaudeville was also accessible to women from other backgrounds. Lucile "Lady" Duff Gordon, Titanic survivor and international fashion designer, conceptualized

and staged a fundraising play, Fleurette's Dream at Peronne that held the top position in Keith's Vaudeville circuit for six months in 1917 and 1918.[46] Historians say Duff Gordon's involvement in Vaudeville came as the result of her London store closing, legal trouble over breach of contract, and trouble with her business partners that left her with financial issues. Duff Gordon insisted it was because she wanted to do something to help the war efforts. Either way, she ended up having such a successful show that it went from being a one-time fundraiser to a steady six-month production with a weekly compensation of $2500.[47] This was not the first time she was approached for a Vaudeville gig, but it was the first time she agreed to it after spending two-years declining other offers.[48]

Duff Gordon's entry into Vaudeville ended up being much more than just a way to raise money or earn an income. According to historian Marlis Schweitzer, it was also a platform for Duff Gordon to use her voice in promotion of consumerism as a patriotic activity. Her advocacy for spending was a direct contradiction of President Woodrow Wilson's admonitions to engage in restraint during American involvement in the Great War. He claimed self-sacrifice and repurposing were the real signs of good citizenship, but, as Schweitzer points out, American culture today revolves around buying, not reusing.[49] This example, again, shows the power Vaudeville gave women to make themselves publicly visible and their political voices heard as well as the fluidity it had to make women from many different industries part of its culture.

Unfortunately, not all women who tried their luck in Vaudeville had the same levels of success or as many positive experiences as Tanguay, Tucker, Rainey, or Duff Gordon. Sexism and racism permeated the entertainment industries the same as any other employment women might seek. The short-lived White Rats of America was the fraternal order of Vaudeville performers who tried to protest and fight the practices of Vaudeville management. The organization itself refused to accept women as members but used stories of sexual abuse and exploitation of women, real and imagined, as part of its propaganda. Women hoping for protection or advocating for a women's auxiliary shared their stories of being "insulted and assaulted" by management, of being forced into prostitution or relationships with male authority figures, or of being abandoned by the company in remote areas with no way to get home or fend for themselves.[50] Ironically, the women most likely to be mistreated in these ways, the solo female acts, were also the ones that management and White Rats both maligned for their lack of

femininity.[51] In general, women in Vaudeville had more difficulties conforming to the social expectations of society, especially in their personal lives. Being on the road up to forty plus weeks a year meant their marriages often failed, sometimes resulting in multiple marriages and divorces, and their children were left to be raised by other family members. Sexism and unstable family lives were just two of the difficulties with which women in Vaudeville dealt.

Women of color in Vaudeville experienced many of the same issues as their white counterparts, but also had to deal with racism. Like white women, they were subject to assault and exploitation by the men around them. Additionally, they faced racist attitudes that restricted them from working on stage with white performers, forced them to watch as their acts, notably those with the blues and jazz music, were appropriated, and stand by, or even perform in, blackface and coon calling acts that were created and executed by white men and white women. Women of color who were able to become successful despite all of that are women who deserve a lot of credit and admiration.

The examples of women who found success in Vaudeville may not represent all the women in the industry, but they do represent what was possible for those who use their intellect and talent to seize any opportunity presented to them. Vaudeville supplied the opportunities by providing women with a venue where they were able to exert control over terms of their employment, including their wages, over their creative freedom and freedom of expression, over their upward mobility within the industry, and over their movement in and out of the vaudeville circuit. Women with the talent and determination to use those opportunities for their own success often did so by challenging social norms and embracing the changes taking place as America moved away from Victorian culture and into the new century. These women empowered themselves by entering an exploitive industry and making it work for them.

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[44]Leslie Zemeckis, *Behind the Burly Q: The Story of Burlesque in America* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2013), Kindle, loc. 655.

[45]Tucker, *Some of These Days*, 258-60.

[46]Marlis Schweitzer, "Patriotic Acts of Consumption: Lucile (Lady Duff Gordon) and the Vaudeville Fashion Show Craze" *Theater Journal* vol. 60, no. 4, Popular Culture and Theatre History (Dec. 2008), 585.

[47]Schweitzer, "Patriotic Acts of Consumption," 588.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Ibid., 586.

[50]Kibler, *Rank Ladies*, 184-5.

[51]Ibid., 185.

International Juvenile Justice

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Kids will be kids. Sometimes kids will be bad. After all, they are only children. However, as children grow and mature and learn right from wrong, society expects their behavior to change and for them to conform to the rules and laws of the land. Some juveniles stretch the limits as far as they can. Unfortunately, some of them cross way over the line of acceptable behavior. When this happens, different countries take diverse approaches in dealing with these juveniles. The juvenile justice system varies from region to region throughout the world, and it also varies from country to country within each region.   This paper examines some of the different international approaches to juvenile justice by examining the court system and custodial rules used by China, Japan, Australia, Norway, and Germany. It also examines how distinct cultural beliefs impact these choices.

China

China is the world's most populated country. Of its 1.35 billion people, juveniles under 18 make up 26.1% of the population (Zhao et al., 2018). In China, juvenile tribunals primarily oversee juvenile cases. Different independent tribunals hear different cases depending on whether the case involves criminal activity, civil violations, or administrative issues. To help protect the rights of juveniles, the Supreme People's Court has provided guidelines for the tribunals which include making education the main emphasis and addressing the psychological needs of the juvenile along with coordination of different departments to address these needs (Xiao, n.d.). The juvenile and their guardian appear before the tribunal, often along with counselors who have input into the treatment of the juvenile. Everything that occurs is confidential, sealed, and not accessible to the public, including any personal information.

At one point in 1983, the Chinese government conducted a "severe blow" campaign in which gang leaders were eliminated through public executions to serve as a deterrent to juvenile gang crime (Bakken, 1993). Though some say the campaign was successful, most feel that it had little effect and that a better means of deterrence for juveniles could be accomplished through early and ongoing education. There is a court system for public prosecutors to use, but imprisonment

is very rarely used, and rehabilitation and education, rather than punishment, has always been emphasized in China's juvenile justice system (Xinhua, 2003). In China, there are many noncustodial programs that attempt to mentor, counsel, educate, and reform juvenile offenders. Offenders are also expected to apologize, pay for damages or losses, and at times, the parents are ordered to also discipline the juvenile (Decker & Marteache, 2017, p. 169).

Japan

Around the corner from China is the small country of Japan. This island community is known to have the lowest crime rate in the industrialized world, including crimes committed by juveniles. In fact, only 0.68% of the juveniles in Japan committed a crime in 2014, when traffic violations are not included (Steel & Ohmachi, 2016). The majority of crimes that are committed by juveniles are property crimes and minor infractions such as stealing small items and bicycles, rather than violent crimes against society. The court system in Japan deals with juvenile offenders through Family Court, which serves as a type of gatekeeper for the system and determines which direction the juvenile would be processed through. A few of these options include the possibility of being placed under the direct supervision of probation officers, being placed in a training home, sent off for education, committed to a reform training school, turned over to the public prosecutor, or placed under the supervision of family (Decker & Marteache, 2017).

The underlying principle followed by the Family Court and Japanese culture revolves around "Shonenho", the Juvenile Act or Japanese Juvenile Law. Shonenho believes that the juvenile offender should be treated with tolerance, love, and protection and needs to be shielded from the stigma of crime, rather than just be punished (Tyson, 2000). The cornerstone of this thinking is rehabilitation and reintegration into society, not punishment. This is also the belief followed in the reform training schools. Here, tremendous emphasis is placed on education and vocational training which has resulted in a low re-offending rate. The Family Court itself is set up in a non-threatening manner and is closed to the public. The Family Court revolves around an investigation and hearing. However, public prosecutors are not allowed, and usually the only people present are the investigator, the juvenile, and his guardians. The judge listens to all the information provided by the investigator and the juvenile and often takes into account the environment in which the juvenile lives, which sometimes provides a deeper understanding of the

choices the juvenile made. These circumstances often influence the judge's final recommendations of the Family Court.

In many cases of juvenile crime, the police are given a wide range of powers in dealing with offenders. Up to 80% of offenders are not arrested in Japan (Foote, 1992). Instead, the police may verbally reprimand the suspect and require a written or verbal apology along with a promise to not commit the crime again. They may call the parents or a family member to watch over the juvenile to make sure he does not commit the crime again in the future. They can order the suspect to pay for damages and they keep a written record of the event for future reference. The fact that the police are so respected by the Japanese community and often serve as mentors and counselors allows them to play a major role in reforming and shaming the juvenile and his family as a deterrent to crime. Old traditions like family honor and respect for elders and authority are still very important to the Japanese culture. Because of this, juveniles found guilty of wrongdoing tend to be more cooperative with the second chance they are given by the police and Family Court. In Japan, a juvenile will apologize for the shame he has brought upon himself and his family. An apology is very significant because it signifies acknowledging the wrongful act, making a statement to not reoffend, a desire to restore the relationship, and asking humbly for forgiveness (Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1986). In addition, the family of the offender is often responsible for providing restitution for damages resulting from their child's delinquent behavior, which they willingly do without question.

Australia

South of the Asian region lies the island of Australia. Here, the juvenile justice system is very different from the one encountered in Japan. Unlike Japan, where juvenile offenders are treated in a more nourished approach that includes protection, love, and tolerance, in Australia, juveniles are sometimes housed in abusive juvenile detention centers. The tactics and harsh treatment of some of the juveniles held in these canters have drawn criticism and international media attention.

In Australia, each territory or state creates its own set of policies covering juvenile justice. However, generally, when a youth aged 10-17 is charged with a crime, they must appear in court where they could receive a sentence which can be ordered as supervised or unsupervised. If ordered supervised, the juvenile

offender would be placed in either community supervision or detention. In 2016-2017, 83% of juvenile offenders ordered to be supervised were supervised in the community, while 17% were placed in detention (Australia, 2018). Many youth awaiting sentencing are also placed in detention centers.

The most common type of community supervision requires the offender to report to a designated agency on a regular basis and to be continuously involved in various treatment programs designated by the court. Likewise, youth receiving a suspended detention sentence are placed under community supervision and remain under this system as long as they follow all court orders. Diversionary and restorative programs encourage juveniles to accept responsibility for their actions and incorporate family and group conferencing and counseling (Parliament, n.d.). If a juvenile is placed under suspended detention and violates any of the terms of his court orders, the youth will be placed in detention.

There are hundreds of detention centers located throughout Australia. Most resemble the harshest of adult maximum security facilities with barbed wire fences, bare rooms with stone walls, and steel or barred doors. These facilities often lack proper heating or cooling, have inadequate clean water or food, and are often unclean and unsanitary. Widespread abuses have been reported to occur in these facilities including juveniles being shoved into walls, pushed onto the floor, violently stripped naked, made to stand in place for twenty-four hours at a time, tear gassed, choked, placed in solitary confinement for days, abused and humiliated verbally, and assaulted in other ways too numerous to list. This horrific treatment was exposed in an ABC news report detailing how a 17-year old boy was hooded and restrained by his neck and extremities in a mechanical chair at a detention facility in Alice Springs, Australia (Doran & Anderson, 2016). This harsh treatment causes juveniles to experience health problems, miss out on education, and become angry, aggressive, or depressed, which can lead to suicide, worsening behavioral problems, or an escalation of criminal behavior once released from the facility. The Australian Parliament is reviewing reports and evidence to look further into the mistreatment occurring at the detention facilities, and commissioners have called for a royal commission to further investigate abuse allegations that have been made in many locations.

Norway

As Australia attempts to investigate and reform their juvenile justice system, they may wish to look to the northwest to the Scandinavian country of Norway. Norway's rate of incarceration of juveniles is a third of Australia's and their goal is to keep their juveniles completely out of detention whenever possible because the majority of Norwegians feel that incarceration does more harm than good (Carter & Carrick, 2017). The culture in Norway is to love and protect children. Parents tend to be very involved in their children's lives and there is stability in families. This philosophy is carried over into the juvenile justice system. There is no punishment for any crimes committed by juveniles under 15 years old and, while older juveniles may make an appearance in court, in most cases, the judge turns the juvenile over to social workers in child welfare offices for treatment rather than punishment (Van Wormer, 1990). The child welfare committee devises an action plan, which is discussed in a youth conference and may recommend non-prosecution, fines, community service, mediation, or youth punishment. Action plans vary widely and encompass things like going to school, attending meetings with police, moving into a children's home, avoiding contact with certain people, abstaining from alcohol and drugs, or performing 30-240 hours of community service (Holmboe, 2017). Open care measures may be recommended and consist of a wide range of psychological and psychiatric programs, social support for both the parent and child, substance abuse programs, school work programs, and the appointment of mentors available around the clock to provide support for the juvenile. In Norway, there are many child welfare institutions, and these children's homes exist to provide guidance, not punishment. The atmosphere is friendly and homelike with features like gardens and peaceful yards full of trees and flowers, which contribute to the homelike atmosphere that they strive to attain. In addition, the correctional staff at these facilities have two or four year college degrees in psychology or social work or child development, so they are well equipped to help these juveniles navigate through their action plans, and they form relationships with the juveniles and help them learn to return to society successfully (Carter & Carrick, 2017).

Every effort is used to try to restrict imprisonment, although some crimes like murder or some sexual offenses may include prison time. There are no courts in Norway to try juvenile criminal cases so juveniles appear in ordinary court. If a juvenile is sent to prison, they are kept separate and stay in open institutions

(Lappi-Seppola, 2011). In these open prisons, prisoners do not get locked up and are expected to complete their sentence on the honor system. While in prison, restorative justice is practiced, which focuses on prisoner/juvenile offender rehabilitation, education, and eventual re-entry into society. This has resulted in a recidivism rate of 20%, the lowest in the world (Sterbenz, 2014). In 1991, Norway was one of the first Scandinavian countries to adopt mediation, which is now used nationwide, and this method has successfully diverted 30-40% of cases from the criminal justice system to avoid imprisonment altogether (Lappi-Seppala, 2011).

Germany

Just south and east of Norway, in the European region, is the country of Germany. Like Norway, Germany believes in community programs and support groups, rehabilitation, and reintegration rather than imprisonment when dealing with juvenile offenders.   Unique to the German system is the handling of young adults of ages 18-21. In Germany, unlike most countries, these young adults are processed through the juvenile courts rather than adult courts because they believe that the adolescent brain does not really mature until the early twenties. Allowing these young adults to process through juvenile court also allows them to receive the milder sanctions of the Juvenile Justice Act, which are given to teenage offenders in Germany. Equally important, this also allows the young adult to be housed in the more nurturing environment found in Germany's juvenile facilities.

The philosophy in Germany when handling juveniles is minimum intervention with priority given to diversion and non-punitive rehabilitation processes (Decker & Marteache, 2017, p. 319). There are multiple specialty units to specifically address this youth population including youth social workers, mediators, prosecutors, police, and professional and lay judges whose goal is to find solutions and treatments as an alternative to detention. Imprisonment is considered a last resort. Instead, the German system emphasizes diversion, education, rehabilitation, and reintegration as the primary methods to reform and reintegrate juvenile offenders. Approximately 70% of juvenile and young adults are diverted and only 2% of all cases end in imprisonment (Matthews, Schiraldi, & Chester, 2018). Cases can be diverted if the juvenile sincerely apologizes and rectifies the wrong and participates in community service, mediation, counseling programs, education, and restorative actions such as repaying the victim through labor or direct compensation (Matthews, et al, 2018).

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When juveniles or the young adults are placed in juvenile facilities like Neustrelitz, life does not revolve around punishment, bare walls, and mistreatment. Instead, there are many activities and programs to help the offender learn responsibility and compassion and empathy, all qualities they need to succeed in society. Instead of cold, depressing rooms, the youth stay in small groups in white buildings with windows that are blocked by bars but open to let in the breeze and sunshine and the smells and sounds of the outdoors. There are horses to ride and take care of, and rabbits to feed, pet, and race. The inmates tend to gardens, care for animals, help paint buildings and fences, and make repairs to the facility. In addition, there are opportunities to learn skills such as welding, painting, and cooking, which will translate into jobs when they are ready to re-enter society. In this facility, the youth and young adults are treated not as subordinate inmates but as respected people which gives them something many of them lack: a sense of self-worth and self-respect. The young adults are allowed to stay, and many choose to stay, until they are twenty-four years old. When a young adult's sentence is complete, the prison helps them to find a job and apartment to live in after they leave. As stated by Kai Schulz, an inmate at Neustrelitz, "Make prisoners realize, like they do here, that they have only one life. I realized through therapy that I had a second chance" (Chammah, 2015). Although some of these juveniles may once again resort to crime after they leave the protective environment of Neustrelitz, the majority take advantage of this second chance they are given.

Conclusion

The juvenile justice system varies from region to region throughout the world. It also varies from country to country within each region. There is no perfect answer for all the issues these troubled juveniles bring with them. However, the majority of countries examined in this paper have taken the approach of trying to help re-socialize and rehabilitate the juvenile offender so that they will have a better chance of success when they try to reintegrate into mainstream society. Most countries, with the exception of Australia, try to avoid imprisonment and punishment, and instead focus on counseling and rely on multiple social and community programs to help the juvenile build a stronger foundation to stand on. Some countries like Germany, Norway, and Japan have been very successful, and perhaps their programs should be mirrored, or at least investigated, by countries

like Australia that continue to struggle to rehabilitate and reintegrate their troubled youth. The youth of today will be the adults of tomorrow. It is in everyone's best interest to help juveniles who get into trouble to accept responsibility for their actions and to take steps to become a better person who will be able to contribute to the world that they live in, in a positive and constructive way.

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Politicizing Disease: The AIDS Epidemic and Homosexuality

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AIDS, or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, is a virulent disease that spread like wildfire and claimed thousands of lives throughout the 1980s, even as people remained relatively unaware of the gravity of the disease and its implications. Only one of many problems plaguing the United States during the 80s, the AIDS epidemic proved to be one of the most significant events that shaped a transformative and volatile decade. The emergence of a never-before-seen disease had far-reaching ramifications that could hardly be foreseen. AIDS proved to be a mysterious disease, as it initially appeared to specifically target homosexual men. Due to this, people saw AIDS not just as a disease, but rather as a "gay disease."[1] The responses to the disease therefore reflected the connection between AIDS and homosexuality, resulting in a slow response on the part of government officials and religious leaders who often expressed disapproval of homosexuality; this was not merely a medical issue, but a social one as well.

It is perhaps necessary to begin with a brief overview of what AIDS is and how scientists identified it. In 1981, the first official report of AIDS, originally termed GRID for gay-related immune deficiency, appeared. The report, written by immunologist Dr. Michael Gottlieb, appeared in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) publication *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR). The report discussed an apparent link between homosexuality and new cases of *Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia* (PCP). Doctors in Los Angeles diagnosed five gay men with PCP within a few months of each other and two of them died.[2] Then, scientists discovered that another disease, Kaposi's sarcoma (KS), a rare type of cancer, had been reported in 26 homosexual men. These numbers quickly increased and in some instances, doctors found both PCP and KS in patients, primarily gay men. Originally, scientists did not know how these two diseases connected to homosexuality, though many theories emerged. It ultimately became clear that PCP and KS resulted from immunosuppression.[3] These diseases acted as opportunistic infections, taking advantage of a weakened immune system. In

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1983, scientists discovered that AIDS had been caused by a retrovirus later called human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV, which found its way to the United States from Africa in the late 1970s.[4] This virus wreaks havoc on a person's immune system, leaving them susceptible to opportunistic infections such as PCP and KS. In just over a year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) received 593 reports of AIDS. Of these, 243, or just over 40 percent, resulted in death. And this was just the beginning. In the coming years, the number of AIDS cases doubled every six months.[5]

Many historians agree that society as a whole responded slowly to AIDS; the disease spread rapidly while the government seemed to lag behind. However, disagreement arises when discussing the questions of why there seemed to be so much hesitation among public officials to confront the issue of AIDS and to what extent people with the responsibility of addressing the issue neglected their duty. In an essay entitled "AIDS and Metaphor: Toward the Social Meaning of Epidemic Disease" published in *In Time of Plague*, Allan M. Brandt suggests that the federal government rejected certain policies, such as promoting sex education and the use of condoms, because of feared social consequences, such as potentially being seen as encouraging homosexual behavior. However, he also believes that scientists made relatively speedy progress since they quickly discovered the underlying cause of the disease.[6]

Randy Shilts, an investigative journalist who, in 1987, wrote *And the Band Played On*, a book that dives into the early years of the epidemic, had a different idea. He considered the response to the epidemic slow in almost all regards. Even the scientific community, he believed, had not done enough. Many scientists avoided researching the disease since there existed little prestige in doing so. Those who did research AIDS faced two significant problems that delayed their efforts: international conflict and lack of funding. Shilts documents the disputes between scientists in France and those in the United States concerned with who should receive credit for the discovery of the virus later called HIV. The French claimed they identified the virus first, labeling it LAV for lymphadenopathy-associated virus, while American scientists insisted they first discovered what they instead called HTLV-III, or human T-cell lymphotropic virus type three. Shilts believed this petty dispute prevented cooperation between the scientists who may have made more progress had they worked together. The other issue concerned funding, which in many cases proved nonexistent or inadequate. Much of the money for AIDS

research, Shilts believed, was too little and too late. He also believed the reason the government hesitated to fund this research and thus ignored the disease resulted from the social implications of AIDS: the disease mainly seemed to affect gay men, a part of society Shilts argued the government willingly overlooked.[7]

While Shilts had a very impassioned view regarding the response to AIDS due to his own experiences with the disease, others like Albert R. Jonsen and Jeff Stryker viewed the epidemic through a more impartial lens, aiming to understand the underlying influences that contributed to the slow and sometimes apathetic responses. Jonsen and Stryker, editors of *The Social Impact of AIDS in the United States*, a 1993 report from the National Research Council (US) Panel on Monitoring the Social Impact of the AIDS Epidemic, discussed the ways in which the AIDS epidemic differed from other historical epidemics. They point out that AIDS differed dramatically from other epidemic diseases namely because an individual could live with the disease for years before realizing a problem existed. The strange nature of AIDS then explained why scientists struggled to reign in the disease, especially without adequate funding. The report examined the "trajectory of limited initial response" among several institutions including, but not limited to, the public health system, clinical research/drug regulation, and religion. The panel demonstrated how the response of these institutions was originally slow, while the responses over the long-term proved quite different.[8]

Ultimately, the slow response to AIDS resulted from views held by government officials and prominent figures in the religious community regarding homosexuality. Government officials had an important effect on AIDS due to their willingness, or lack thereof, to allocate funding for AIDS research, and in the types of legislation they passed to educate the public on AIDS. The religious community, commanding influence over the general public as well as public officials, had a significant impact on legislation and on how AIDS education proceeded. The response of these groups had been greatly impacted by the fact that gay men made up the majority falling prey to the disease. As a result of this association between AIDS and homosexuality, the process of providing prompt care for those afflicted was greatly delayed.

Across the board, people hesitated to address the epidemic and indifference permeated society. The media rarely covered the disease, and when they did, they did so mostly when the victim happened to be heterosexual. This did not change until the actor Rock Hudson died in 1985 after being diagnosed with

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AIDS. The response time of the medical community proved uncharacteristically slow when it came to AIDS. When compared with other diseases, a remarkable distinction can be made. For example, "the more popular Legionnaire's disease affected fewer people and proved less likely to be fatal," yet there proved to be "a degree of attention and funding for research and treatment far greater than that made available" to the victims of AIDS.[9] Legionnaire's affected mostly white heterosexuals while the groups at risk for AIDS mainly consisted of homosexuals and drug-addicts, as well as a fraction of Haitian immigrants in the U.S. However, the reasons for the slow response from scientists potentially had less to do with the fact that they did not care and more to do with the lack of funding being provided by the government. Signs of the disease first appeared in 1981, yet the cause of the disease remained undiscovered until 1983, and a viable treatment option, namely in the form of azidothymidine (AZT), an anti-retroviral drug, did not get approved until 1987. And even still, incidents of death as a result of AIDS did not significantly decline until the mid-to-late 1990s. Between 1988 and 1992, over 200,000 people in the U.S. had AIDS and almost 90 percent of them died.[10]

The obvious question to ask is why. Why did the epidemic get as bad as it did? There is no simple or straightforward answer. Some may point to the international disputes between scientists who grew distracted from their research by pointless squabbles concerning credit for the discovery of HIV. Others may blame the media's indifference and reluctance to print stories about the so-called "gay disease." Maybe it resulted from the poor funding provided by the government that prevented scientists from obtaining all the resources they needed to effectively conduct research. Possibly, it was due to the often negative views of homosexuality held by many Americans, or religious groups that halted education programs. Sometimes this denouncement of homosexuality resulted from the presence of bathhouses, or places where gay men could go to have sexual relations. Many people associated the baths with promiscuity and when public officials suggested closing the baths in the 1980s since they contributed to the spread of AIDS, they witnessed significant pushback. However, while it is tempting to pinpoint one specific factor and attribute all the problems of the AIDS epidemic to it alone, in reality, all these things, and others mattered. Randy Shilts perhaps framed it best:

> Later, everybody agreed the baths should have been closed sooner;
> they agreed health education should have been more direct and more
> timely. And everybody also agreed blood banks should have tested blood

sooner, and that a search for the AIDS virus should have been started sooner, and that scientists should have laid aside their petty intrigues. Everybody subsequently agreed that the news media should have offered better coverage of the epidemic much earlier, and that the federal government should have done much, much more. By the time everyone agreed to all this, however, it was too late. Instead people died. Tens of thousands of them.[11]

Though many issues contributed to the delayed response, some proved more impactful than others, specifically concerning the roles that both government and religious groups played. The lack of funding became a significant issue in the early years of the epidemic. Time and time again, individual researchers and scientific institutions pressured Congress for more funding. One of many instances of this occurred in 1982 when Dr. Donald Francis, a retrovirologist at the Centers for Disease Control, requested more funding for basic research and was denied. Dr. Michael Gottlieb, an immunologist at the University of California studying the disease, experienced similar results when he requested increased funding. This experience was often shared by others; when researchers asked for more money, they were often denied or ignored.[12] In many instances, "private voluntary organizations, many of them growing out of the gay rights movement… mobilized perhaps more effectively than any level of government."[13] Organizations like the Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) formed to pick up where the government left off, raising funds to assist people afflicted with AIDS, creating an AIDS hotline, providing counselors for emotional support, and offering legal assistance. The organization raised $150,000 in its first year of operation. While significant, this did not amount to much in the long run.

Funding for AIDS research became a substantial obstacle that scientists and public health officials during the 1980s struggled to overcome, especially in the early half of the decade. As briefly mentioned earlier, it is necessary to note the peculiar nature of AIDS, specifically regarding the tendency of the disease to lay dormant for months or even years at a time. This made it problematic for scientists to ascertain who had been infected before the severe symptoms appeared. The fact that symptoms did not appear very quickly, however, does not mean that funding would not have aided researchers significantly in terms of guaranteeing faster results. Researchers required funding in order to seek out

the cause of AIDS and secure treatment options for those infected. And once scientists discovered the virus causing AIDS in 1983, they were able to conduct antibody tests to determine who was infected, diminishing their earlier problem. This discovery paved the way for testing experimental drugs that could treat AIDS. Unfortunately, the lack of sufficient funding prevented these efforts from being entirely successful. In addition, more money in the earlier years of the decade might very well have allowed scientists to isolate the virus much sooner. For the first half of the 1980s, "only two scientists had received grants to conduct research on retroviruses and AIDS." It is sobering to compare the funding for the first year of the AIDS epidemic to that of Legionnaire's disease. While the CDC had allocated $9 million to the latter, the former received a mere $1 million.[14] Congress did not approve the first legislation dedicated to AIDS funding until mid-1983. In the latter half of the decade, the situation gradually improved, but it was not until the 1990s that things dramatically changed.[15]

Yet, even while the shortcomings of AIDS funding became clear, the Reagan administration, in its proposed 1986 budget, considered reducing the funding for AIDS by 10 percent. It is likely the government simply wanted to reduce spending all across the board but, had the proposal passed, it could have had disastrous effects on AIDS research. To the credit of Congress, they ignored this proposal and actually increased funding despite the desires of the White House. However, Congress only increased spending on AIDS in 1986; this was the post-Hudson era of AIDS, a time when concern for the disease had slightly increased due to Hudson's AIDS-related death. It is more difficult to envision this same outcome had the year been 1983. At that point, AIDS fell so far below the government's radar that, in a 1982 press briefing, laughter erupted when a reporter asked about the "gay plague" and Press Secretary Larry Speakes declared that he had no idea what AIDS was.[16] President Ronald Reagan had not even mentioned the disease publicly; in fact, he did not do so until 1985.[17] The reason for this is not entirely known, though it can be speculated that he considered it prudent to wait until after his re-election campaign to discuss such a controversial disease.

Often, local or state government officials responded much better to the AIDS epidemic than the Regan administration or Congress. For instance, then-Mayor Diane Feinstein of San Francisco, one of the cities with the largest outbreak of AIDS, had a relatively positive track record. Her budget for AIDS grew larger than the national AIDS budget provided by the Reagan administration for two

consecutive years in the mid-80s.[18]

Another central issue to the AIDS response concerned education. It remained vital to inform the public on ways in which the disease could be contracted, spread, and avoided. In the 1987 March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights, marchers demanded, among other things, "that the federal government fund a massive AIDS education and prevention program that is explicit, culturally sensitive, lesbian/gay affirming and sex positive."[19]   Despite their best hopes, they did not receive this, or anything close to it. Only a few days after the March, the Senate voted 94-2 approving a measure "requiring federally financed educational materials about AIDS to stress sexual abstinence and forbidding it to promote homosexuality or drug use." This meant that "the use of clean needles or condoms to protect against AIDS could be interpreted under the amendment as condoning drug use or sexual activity," resulting in an abstinence-only education that did not teach teenagers about the use of condoms to prevent AIDS infection.[20] Condoms were a hot topic in the 1980s. Many Americans opposed the promotion of condoms and safe sex education, especially for teenagers, on the grounds that they promoted promiscuity. How much more so then did people oppose safe sex education when inextricably tied to homosexual practices? In 1984, Reagan released a statement stressing that his administration planned to "resist the efforts of some to obtain government endorsement of homosexuality."[21]   Even three years later, this sentiment remained among many in government. The idea that promotion of condoms for use in safe sex education and among gay men for AIDS prevention, promulgated homosexuality was an irrational fear held by many that often prevented accurate information about AIDS from reaching the public. Therefore, while the scientific community made momentous progress by 1987 with the introduction of drugs like AZT to the market, the government made backward progress in terms of educating the public.

People like then-Surgeon General C. Everett Koop considered this unacceptable. Dr. Koop had made enemies, especially among conservative evangelicals who had originally supported his appointment as Surgeon General in 1981. Former associates turned against him due to his promotion of condoms among homosexuals; his previous supporters felt betrayed by what they perceived to be his support of homosexuality. But Dr. Koop concerned himself with saving lives. In 1988, he had AIDS brochures sent all over the United States to clarify any misconceptions about the disease and provide general information, including an

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affirmation that "condoms are the best preventive measure against AIDS besides not having sex and practicing safe behavior."[22] Actions like this by the Surgeon General did not please the conservative base that once supported him. In a letter, Phyllis Schlafly and Paul Weyrich, two conservative political activists, expressed outrage at the idea that "he has urged sex education 'at the lowest grade possible' that includes 'information on heterosexual and homosexual relationships' and the 'risk behaviors that expose them to infection with the AIDS virus.'" They went on to say that "Dr. Koop's proposals for stopping AIDS represent the homosexuals' views, not those of the pro-family movement."[23] In 1989, Koop criticized some of the stances being taken by such evangelical leaders as "reprehensible."[24]

Members of the religious community struggled to properly address the AIDS epidemic, but Christians responded to AIDS in markedly different ways. According to Jonsen and Stryker, "the AIDS epidemic is marked by one feature that has made it particularly problematic for religion, namely, the group initially hardest hit" was homosexual men.[25] The AIDS epidemic shaped religious thought on homosexuality, in some cases reaffirming a belief in the immorality of homosexuality while in other instances evoking empathy and understanding among the religious. Responses from Christians regarding AIDS ranged from advocating on behalf of those afflicted and providing care and comfort in their time of need, to placing blame on the supposed immoral and unnatural nature of homosexuality.

In the 1980s, some members of the religious community became inspired to help those afflicted with the disease. Earl Shelp, a Baptist pastor out of Houston, became one of the earliest to encourage Christians to help. Shelp founded Interfaith Care Partners, a group dedicated to providing assistance to people with AIDS.[26] Others shared in his efforts. Episcopal leaders in San Francisco, "rather than condemning homosexual behavior… encouraged churches to fight AIDS by advocating that their gay parishioners form monogamous relationships."[27] Unfortunately, these examples did not necessarily represent the norm. AIDS posed a significant problem for Christians in American society since a majority of AIDS victims were gay men and many Christians held to a doctrine that stressed the immoral nature of homosexual acts. At the same time, religious tradition typically called for its followers to show compassion and care for the sick and outcast. Finding a solution to the dilemma did not prove easy. In 1986, the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) recognized "that churches as

institutions have been slow to speak and to act… and that through their silence, [they] share responsibility for the fear that has swept [the] world more quickly than the virus itself." This organization attempted to solve the problem by urging churches to avoid "rigid moralisms" and discrimination against those with AIDS.[28]

The Roman Catholic Church also struggled with the question of how best to assist people with AIDS since the Church disapproved of homosexuality and condom use, an effective means of avoiding the disease. In a letter approved by Pope John Paul II, the Vatican expressed its desire that "pastoral attention" be given to people with AIDS so as to ensure that they are not "led to believe that the living out of this orientation in homosexual activity is a morally acceptable option." They stressed, "It is not." But while the Church clearly reaffirmed their long-held belief in the immorality of homosexuality, they also expressed their belief that "it is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech or in action." The letter went on to say that the Church condemned any such treatment.[29] To the present day, the Roman Catholic Church has a significant, and now mostly positive, role in preventing the spread of AIDS, especially in Africa where the disease remains a particularly big issue. Today, the Church "provides more direct care for people with AIDS… than any other institution." But the Church's effectiveness has been somewhat limited, now as well as in the 1980s, due to the Vatican's rejection of "prevention campaigns that pay special attention to those at highest risk of HIV infection… saying that such recognition implied approval of immoral acts."[30] In addition, the Church's disapproval of condoms prevented Catholics from encouraging methods of safe sex that guarded against AIDS.

Part of the slow response to the epidemic arose due to the fear and hysteria that swept the nation in the wake of the AIDS epidemic. Some of this panic resulted from ignorance; many people simply did not understand how the disease spread and the measures they could take to avoid its clutches. Because outbreaks of disease can spread such chaos and create such fear, especially when there is so much stigma surrounding the disease as in the case of AIDS, education programs are of vital importance. But clearly, attempts at educating the public during the AIDS epidemic provided, at best, mediocre results. As Robert Scheer argues, some of this hysteria can be forgiven since "fear is understandable when people do not have knowledge about the disease." However, concludes Scheer, "manipulating that fear is unforgivable."[31] Sadly, this occurred too often.

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A poignant example of fear mongering came in the form of a picture on the cover of a 1983 edition of the *Moral Majority Report*, a periodical created by and for the Christian Right. This image portrays a typical, nuclear, American family, but with a twist. Everyone in the photo is wearing surgical masks. The caption reads, "AIDS: Homosexual Diseases Threaten American Families."[32] At this point, the HIV virus had not yet been discovered. However, scientists understood the ways in which the disease spread. AIDS is spread through contact with blood or semen, a fact well established at the time. But scientists often struggled in the 1980s to repudiate the spread of misinformation which made people believe the disease could be spread by saliva or, as this example suggests, through the air.

As well as spreading fear, a few chose to use the epidemic's impact on homosexuals as "a strategy of blaming the gay community for starting the epidemic and portraying homosexuals as ongoing dangers to themselves and to heterosexuals."[33] This was not difficult to do. Homosexuals had already been outcasts, facing discrimination from society long before the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s. The situation managed to get worse because of the connection made between the disease and homosexuality. Soon, some people began to see homosexuality not just as an immoral act practiced by a small portion of society, but instead as a direct threat to their person. "Homosexuals weren't just the victims of the plague… they were also the spreaders of the plague."[34]

In an essay entitled "Placing Blame for Devastating Disease" published in *In Time of Plague*, authors Dorothy Nelkin and Sander L. Gilman examine the social aspect of diseases like AIDS and determine that "blaming has always been a means to make mysterious and devastating diseases comprehensible and therefore possibly controllable."[35] Blaming is a rational, albeit, demoralizing aspect of human nature not unique to the AIDS epidemic. From the beginning, people have attempted to place blame whenever possible in order to make sense of the things they could not easily explain. People easily placed the blame for the AIDS epidemic on homosexuals. Most Americans widely misunderstood AIDS for a multitude of reasons; as a result, its victims were stigmatized and feared, despite the progress made by the scientific community to fight AIDS and bring awareness to the disease.

Much of this reaction had to do with the widespread distaste for homosexual practices in society, in some instances supported on religious grounds, and in others based purely on general homophobic ideas held by a

large portion of society. Because these views had spread throughout society, it is little wonder that as gay men started dying, many took little notice, or knew but simply did not care. One columnist for the *National Review* remarked in 1985, in regards to homosexuality, that "abnormal sex is, simply, normless." He callously commented that "AIDS has created a new journalistic genre: the sufferings of the AIDS victim," arguing that "the culture of homosexual promiscuity in which the disease has flourished" did not get discussed as much as individual stories of AIDS sufferers that he considered nothing more than an attempt to excite sympathy among readers.[36]

Comments like this could hardly be considered unique, or anything new. Patrick Buchanan, in an article from 1983, remarked, "the poor homosexuals; they have declared war upon nature, and now nature is exacting an awful retribution."[37] In an article published in the *National Review* in 1986, Joseph Sobran, echoing Buchanan, referred to "the avenging angel of AIDS" that, to him and others, appeared to be "a ghastly retribution for a repulsive vice." Sobran refers to gay men as "the boys of Sodom."[38] Buchanan also used this allusion, referring to the "homosexual communities of Sodom and Gomorrah."[39] This is an allusion to the biblical cities of Sodom and Gomorrah which had been so corrupt and full of sin that God had no choice but to send down fire from heaven to destroy them. One of these sins was homosexuality. Another comment that placed the blame of AIDS on its victims came from Jerry Falwell. Falwell, founder of the Moral Majority, in a television debate broadcast in 1983, when asked about his previous comment that AIDS stemmed from "God's judgement on homosexual promiscuity," said that people "pay the price when [they] violate the laws of God."[40] Comments of this nature attempted to justify the slow response to AIDS by blaming the victim for engaging in acts that contributed to the spread of the disease and stood in stark contrast to the beliefs of many in society.

AIDS is a horrendous disease that took thousands of lives and destroyed just as many families in the 1980s. Many people attempted to help in whatever ways they could manage, but with so much stigma and hostility attached to the victims of the epidemic, namely gay men and drug addicts, the response was limited. Scientists, like Don Francis and Michael Gottlieb among many others, worked long nights to overcome shortcomings in their funds and a general feeling of disinterest in the disease present among others in order to find the virus behind the debilitating disease, as well as a viable treatment option for those suffering

its effects. The government struggled to provide funding to AIDS research early enough in its emergence to have a significant impact and views of homosexuality, often framed in religious terms, contributed to a sense of complacency and indifference, despite the best efforts of some.

It is important to remember the tremendous impact AIDS had on society when it first appeared in the United States in the 1980s. And it is important to remember that, while the disease is no longer a death sentence for most Americans diagnosed, it remains a world crushing, and often fatal diagnosis in other parts of the world. There is no cure. But there is still hope.

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Bush, Obama, and the Use of Religious Rhetoric in Regards to the Middle East

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On September 11, 2001 the radical Islamic terror group al Qaeda attacked America on her own soil. The attack was orchestrated by Osama bin Laden, at the time, the leader of the terror organization. This one attack would change the path of U.S. foreign policy, not only towards the Middle East, but also towards religion, and more specifically Islam. This attack is not the only event that connected American foreign policy to the Islam religion. Islam is also at odds with one of America's strongest allies, Israel. Israel was founded after World War II and since then, conflicts have ensued on which religion holds rights to Jerusalem. Religion has also played a role in the average American's life and in American domestic policy. But has religion played a role in how the U.S. frames their foreign policy decisions? How often did George W. Bush and Barack Obama invoke religion when talking about the conflicts in the Middle East?

Presidents have often appealed to religion when they talk about foreign policymaking. In the 2016 presidential election, the war on terror and the term "radical Islamic terror" was a big talking point. Donald Trump seemed to make it a point to say this term and call out anyone who refused to say it. In 2005, then-President George W. Bush claimed that God told him to invade Iraq to end the tyranny taking place there. In 2014, then-President Obama spoke at the National Prayer Breakfast. In his speech, Obama singled out China on the issue of religious freedom. Since the United States' foreign policy in regards to the Middle East is vast, I will focus on the two major conflicts that stemmed from the attacks on September 11, Afghanistan and Iraq. I will also look at how both presidents framed their decisions regarding Israel due to the fact that many American Christians sympathize with Israel in their disputes with Palestine (Lipka 2014). Fifty percent of white Evangelicals even said a there is no way for peace to exist between Israel and Palestine (ibid.) One would assume if a president were to try to gain support

of evangelicals, they would support the evangelical view of Israel.

I argue that leaders in America use religion to frame their decisions more often than the average citizen realizes. Obviously, religion is a large part in the average American's life. In a 2014 Pew Research poll, 70.6% of Americans identified as followers of the Christian faith (Wormald 2015). In a 2015 Gallup poll, only 58% of Americans said they would consider voting for an atheist for president (Gallup 2015). While that number is growing, it is clear that religion plays a major role in the common American's worldview. Presidents sign certain bills into laws, appoint certain judges, and pursue certain foreign policy decisions in hopes of getting reelected. Because of this, it would be safe to assume that presidents would pursue and frame policies that would make the American voter happy. Therefore, I believe religion is a driving force in the way America's leaders frame their foreign policy decisions.

To test this hypothesis, I will focus on three specific policy areas and how both George W. Bush and Barack Obama approached framing them. These issues include the war on terror, both in Afghanistan and in Iraq, and Israel.

Literature Review

There has been no lack of studies regarding religion in American life and politics. Haynes (2008) notes that Evangelicals found prominence in politics starting in the 1970s. The United States is considered to be a highly religious country, especially when compared to most western countries. Since that is the case, certain religious organizations or prominent religious figures like Billy Graham or Pat Robertson can rightfully claim that they represent a significant portion of the population. Ordinary citizens listen to these people or organizations to see who they endorse for president, just like some look to the American Civil Liberties Union or the National Rifle Association to see who they endorse, because those citizens feel like their interests or beliefs align with those special interest groups. Therefore, it makes sense that a candidate for president might pander to certain groups or figures. However, that pandering does not stop once they reach office. It would be unwise to decide on or enact a policy, foreign or domestic, that would anger or upset a group of people that makes up the majority of the country. Mayhew states that the main motivation for elected officials is reelection (1974). Since that is the case, it makes since for a president to frame his policies in a way that would not alienate a strong voting bloc of the country.

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Religion has been a pivotal part of the United States since its inception. From the First Amendment, to making 'In God We Trust" as our national motto in the 1950s, religion has often been a deciding factor in the government's domestic policy. Politicians will focus on this group of constituents in their campaigns. As Governor of Texas, George W. Bush addressed a Baptist Church in 1999 by saying faith is the only way for us to have hope and a sense of purpose (Marsden 2012, 956-957). As a presidential candidate, Barrack Obama was able to bridge the political gap between Christianity and the Democratic Party (ibid., 957). While in Chicago, Obama would work on church sponsored programs and even said that his faith is a source of strength for him and faith could even be the foundation for an American renewal (ibid.).

Religion also influences public opinion and political party affiliation. Trends have shown that Evangelicals started to shift towards the Republican party beginning in the 1970s (Brooks and Manza 2004). Having this large group of people supporting Republicans has given them a crucial source of conservative political advantage (ibid.). Fox (2001) finds that religion often influences the believer's worldview and influences their perceptions of world events. One can see how a person of the Christian faith might see the conflict between Israel and Palestine different than a person of the Islamic faith or a person of no faith at all. Survey based studies have determined that religious affiliation influences political attitudes and behavior (ibid., 60-61). These surveys suggest that the more religious a person is, the more that person would lean toward a more conservative political ideology (ibid.).

Baumgartner, Francia, and Morris (2008) analyze how religion influences public opinion of certain U.S. foreign policy decisions. In regards to the wars in the Middle East, many Evangelicals tend to look at these conflicts as good versus evil. Leaders of the Evangelical movement like Pat Robertson and Franklin Graham have been quoted as saying that Islam is bloody and brutal and even go as far as calling it an evil religion (Baumgartner Francia and Morris, 2008, 173). Religion also seems to affect people's attitude towards the invasion of Iraq and the removal of Saddam Hussein. People with religious affiliations tend to support a more hawkish view in regards to this conflict. Evangelicals also seem to view Islam as a violent religion more than people without any religious affiliation (ibid.).

Baumgartner, Francia, and Morris (2008, 173) also show that two thirds of Evangelicals interpret the Bible literally. This significantly shapes their worldview

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when it comes to foreign policy decisions towards places like Israel. The vast majority of Evangelicals support Israel in their conflict with Palestine. This is most likely the case because of what the Bible states; 63% of Evangelicals believe that the events happening in Israel are essential for the end times to come (ibid.). A Pew Research poll from 2006 found that the media was the only influence greater than religion in regards to the conflict between Israel and Palestine (ibid.).

Even though the president does not decide foreign policy unilaterally, he or she is the most significant policymaker in the process. Therefore, it is only appropriate to examine how presidents in a post-9/11 world deal with foreign policy in general. The first president during this time period was George W. Bush. In the short months after the September 11th attacks, the United States invaded the country of Afghanistan, which, at the time, was where al-Qaida and the leader of the terror organization, Osama bin Laden, was based. Bush's strategy in this conflict was hawkish; the notion of spreading American values meshed well with the Bush Doctrine (Scott 2009, 579).

In the Bush Doctrine, Bush said he would make no distinction between terrorist organizations and the countries that harbor them. He also said he wanted to take the fight to the enemy, in their homeland, before they could attack America first. This represented a proactive approach to foreign policy. When describing the Middle East and more specifically, Afghanistan, Bush said these places were neo-feudal, backwards, and barbaric (Scott 2009, 582). This sets up the ordinary American citizen to think of this conflict as a conflict between good and evil or two totally different societies fighting against each other.

Bush did not stop with the invasion of Afghanistan. After the Taliban was toppled, in 2003, the United States invaded Iraq. America's goal in the war with Iraq was to break the nexus of terrorism and get rid of the country's weapons of mass destruction (Lindsay 2011, 765). Bush used their supposed weapons of mass destruction to gain support for this war in the public's eye and in Congress. However, after Baghdad fell, the search for the weapons ensued. When no weapons were found, Bush pivoted to justifying the war in Iraq by saying America was using the opportunity to promote democracy (Scott 2009, 769-770).

The second president the United States has had during this time period was Barrack Obama who took office in 2009. Sixteen months after he was elected, Obama started to withdraw troops from Iraq. He did not just want to shy away from his predecessor's war, he also wanted to shy away from his "freedom agenda"

(Lindsay 2011, 773). Obama did not want to continue having America's foreign policy be dictated by ideology or more or less by religion but instead to be dictated by calculating the pros and cons, by looking at facts and what the country's interest lies (ibid.). This was more of a pragmatist approach to foreign policy than Bush's realist approach (ibid.).

However, just because Obama withdrew troops from Iraq does not mean that he was a dove as president. He continued the bombing of suspected terrorist hideouts in Pakistan and around the Middle East (Lindsay 2011, 775). Obama even sent 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan in hopes of finally defeating the Taliban. By the end of his presidency, there were still almost 10,000 troops stationed there.

Research Design

To see how often both George W. Bush and Barrack Obama used religion in their framing of U.S. foreign policy decisions regarding the Middle East, I will use the American Presidency Project's website to look at both Bush's and Obama's presidential documents. I believe that both former presidents used religion frequently when framing their foreign policy decisions in regards to the Middle East. To test this, I search for three different types of documents: "religion" combined with "Afghanistan;" "religion" and "Iraq;" and "religion" with "Israel." For Bush, the search encompass the years 2001 to 2008 and for Obama, searches examine 2009 to 2016. The years 2009 for Bush and 2017 for Obama are excluded because they were in office for just twenty days. Including those twenty days in the data could skew the overall percentages of times they used religion in their framing throughout the combined years they were in office. The resulting frequencies demonstrate how many times per year they used the word religion in combination with either Afghanistan, Iraq, or Israel. These frequencies can then be compared across both presidencies by computing the percentages from their first year in office to their last, separately and for all three categories. This data will let us see how often they used religion in framing U.S. foreign policy decisions with religious undertones.
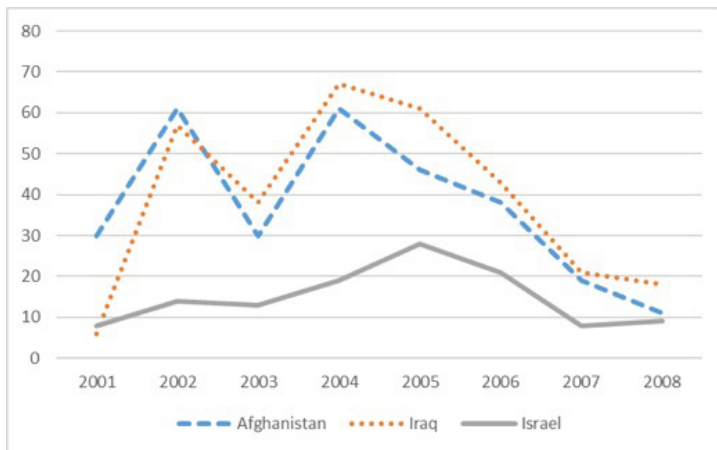
Analysis

In total for George W. Bush, there were 1,428 public documents in regards to Afghanistan, 1,962 in regards to Iraq, and 611 in regards to Israel. On the other hand, Obama had 1,067 public documents in regards to Afghanistan,

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1,120 in regards to Iraq, and 375 in regards to Israel. In all three searches, Bush doubled Obama's use of the combined terms. Bush used the combined terms of religion and Afghanistan 296 times to Obama's 106 times. Bush used religion combined with Iraq 311 times to Obama's 135. In the final search, Bush used religion in conjunction with Israel 120 times during his time in office compared to Obama's 61 times. As depicted in figure 1, Bush's use of religion seemed to increase following the terror attacks on 9/11 and then declined until the 2004 election campaign started to take place, during which there was a jump in religious framing. After Bush's win in the 2004 election, his use of religion as a talking point fell again, while Obama's use of religion increased after his 2012 election victory, as shown in figure 2. Before Obama's 2012 election, his use of religion framing was on a steady decline except for a small jump in regards to the framing of the conflict in Iraq.

Figure 1: Frequency of Religious Mentions in Speeches about Afghanistan, Iraq, and Israel, George W. Bush

Figure 2: Frequency of Religious Mentions in Speeches about Afghanistan, Iraq, and Israel, Barack Obama
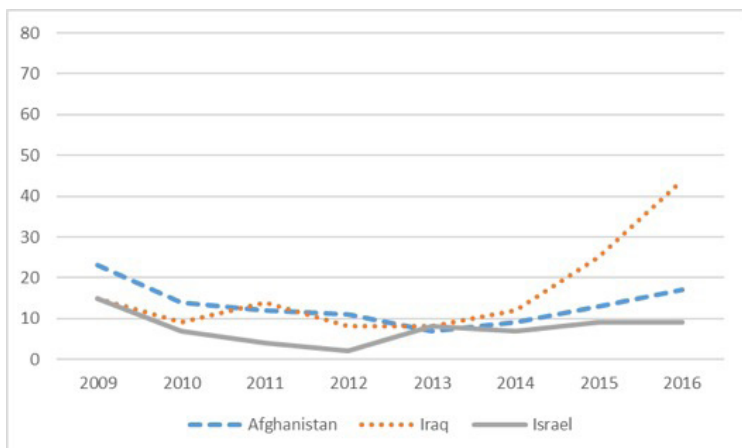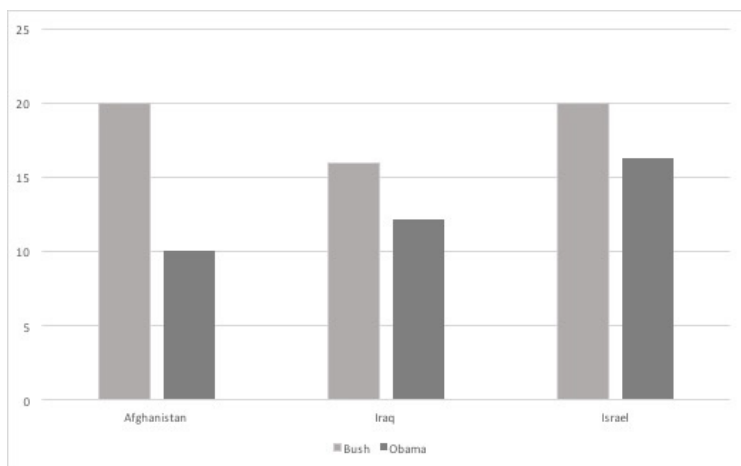

Figure 3: Percentages of Religious Mentions in Speeches about Afghanistan, Iraq, and Israel for Bush and Obama

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Figure 3 displays the percentage of religious mentions in speeches for all three topics for both presidents. Through his years in office, Bush used religion 20% of the time he talked about Afghanistan, 15.9% for Iraq, and 20% for Israel. Obama used religion 10% of the time when talking about Afghanistan, 12.1% for Iraq, and 16.3% for Israel. In terms of sheer numbers, Bush appears to have framed his foreign policy in regards to the Middle East in religious tones much more frequently than Obama did. However, the percentages tell a different story: Bush had nearly double the religious references than Obama when talking about Afghanistan. This could be for a number of reasons. It could be because Bush's voting base was more religious or because Obama wanted to distance himself from the conflict in Afghanistan so he did not talk about it as much as Bush did. The percentages for both former presidents on their Iraq and Israel speeches are much closer. There was only a 3.8% difference in regards to Iraq and only a 3.7% difference in their public papers about Israel. Bush did have 415 more speeches that included Afghanistan in one way or another than Obama did. This further supports the idea that Obama wanted to distance himself from it as much as he could from the Afghanistan conflict.

Conclusion

To find out how often did George W. Bush and Barrack Obama used religion to frame U.S. foreign policy decisions regarding the Middle East, I used the American Presidency Project to search their public papers. I hypothesized that both presidents used religion to frame their foreign policy decisions regarding the Middle East to a significant extent. It turns out that neither president used religion more than 20% of the time in all three policy areas. In each area, Bush had more speeches than Obama overall and Bush often doubled Obama's number of speeches when the use of religion was added to the search. By those numbers, Bush used religion to frame his foreign policy decisions much more frequently than Obama did, but when percentages are calculated, the picture is different. While Bush does double Obama's Afghanistan percentage, both of their Iraq and Israel's percentages are very close together.

These findings tell us how often these former presidents used religion to frame their policies in regards to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Israel. This can be used to tell us why or how public support for the war on terror declined over time. Further research should be done to see if there is a reason why Bush and Obama used

religion this much in their framing of foreign policy and if any hidden references to religion were hidden in these presidential papers. Were there any boosts in public support after their religious rhetoric was used? Did they use other words to reference religion other than just the word "religion?" Was there anything happening in the United States that caused Bush to use religion less in his speeches as his presidency progressed and were there any reasons why Obama started to use religion a little bit more as his presidency started to come to an end? How does a president's use of religion affect the public's perception of the event or policy being framed? The data in this research can be used in future studies to help us further understand religion's effect on the public's perception of certain policies and why presidents use religion to frame certain policies.

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