Make Democracy Work

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*Make America Great Again* functions rhetorically as a *frame* that evokes a set of cognitive associations that shape how we think about issues and envision our political possibilities.
Make Democracy Work, again?

Such frames evolve as they are reproduced, mutate, and adapt to differing rhetorical environments.
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Rhetorical analysis can help us unpack these frames’ emotional, ethical, and sociological connections.
We will be better able to engage with our divisive debates if we step back and reflect on how Americans have organized to defend their rights.

**Black Rights Matter**
Rhetorical analyses of civil rights frames can help us better understand current racial divisions.

**How the Personal Became Political**
Reviewing feminist frames can help us consider how the personal became political in our lives.

**Who’s American/Whose America**
Assessing how immigration has been racialized can help us deliberate on what to do about it.

**Lessons to Be Learned**
If we step back from the politics of the day, we can reflect on democratic ways of life.
Frames are shaped by historical experiences, cognitive tendencies, rhetorical strategies, and cultural dispositions.
How Frames Shape Social Movements and Political Standpoints

• Frames mobilize groups around shared experiences and aspirations
• Frames structure roles and options.
• Inclusive frames can build broad coalitions
• Radical frames often build solidarity within groups but can deepen differences.
The Civil Rights Movement

❖ 1954: Brown v Board of Education
❖ 1955: Rosa Park sparks the Montgomery Boycott, which is led by Martin Luther King
❖ 1957: Civil Rights Act
❖ 1963: March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom
❖ 1964: Civil Rights Bill Signed
❖ 1965: Malcolm X is assassinated, Voting Rights Act, and Selma to Montgomery March
❖ 1968: Martin Luther King is assassinated and Fair Housing Act
More than any other figure, Martin Luther King is the face of the Civil Rights Movement.
King framed the civil rights movement around the principles of nonviolent activism.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality. ... Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

*Letter from a Birmingham Jail*
Constructive, nonviolent tension . . .

Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, so must we see the need . . . to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood.

Letter, April 1963
President Kennedy’s Civil Rights Bill is stalled in Congress in August 1963.

Over 200,000 participate in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.
We've come to our nation’s Capital to cash a check. *When the architects of our republic wrote the . . . the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*
Martin.... still has great moral authority in the South. He has none whatever in the North.... There are lots of Black people who... are themselves produced by a civilization which has always glorified violence. . . . The country is only concerned about non-violence if it seems that I'm going to get violent. It's not worried about non-violence if it's some Alabama sheriff.

(James Baldwin, 1963)
Ella Baker is one of the most influential civil rights leaders you have never heard of

- Coordinated voter registration, Freedom Riders, and numerous conferences and demonstrations
- Secretary and grassroots organizer for NAACP
- Helped organize SCLC but found King too hierarchical
- Criticized “charismatic” leaders
➢ Genuine leadership is the development of the individual to his highest potential for the benefit of the group

➢ Training is needed in non-violent principles and practices, in group dynamics, and in the redirection into creative channels of the normal frustrations and hostilities that result from second-class citizenship.

SNC conference, 1960
King believed “the arc of the moral universe . . . bends toward justice.”

Do you believe that?

➢ Do you believe your destiny is tied up with the destiny of others?

➢ What have been the “creative tensions” that have shaped your experiences with race?

➢ How did the civil rights movement affect you, your family, and community?
How the personal became political

Just as the civil rights movement changed how we view race, the women’s movement have changed how we understand gender.

- Feminism evolved over several generations, though we tend to identify with the feminism of the 60s and 70s
- Works such as Friedan’s *Feminine Mystique* (1963) and Millett’s *Sexual Politics* (1970) set out highly influential feminist frames.
- Two of those are the “Personal is political,” and “consciousness raising”—which helped define the women’s movement and recruit women into it.
Feminism evolved through three ‘waves’

The first wave of feminism is identified with the Suffragist Movement that led up to the 19th Amendment in 1920.

The 1950s and 60s saw the emergence of the women’s liberation movement seeking equal rights.

In the 70s and 80s more militant feminists championed the rights of GLBT and women of color.

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/im-done-being-quiet-about-feminism_b_6941890
First Wave Feminists Focused on Equal Rights

- **1918**: Margaret Sanger wins suit to allow doctors to advise married patients about birth control and opens first birth control clinic, which became Planned Parenthood in 1942.
- **1920**: The 19th Amendment provides voting rights to women.
- **1923**: The first Equal Rights Amendment is introduced.

“Flappers” symbolized the sexual revolution of the Roaring 20s, with its unprecedented prosperity, mass media, and mobility. The number of cars rose from 300,000 in 1918 to 1.9M in 1929. The Harlem Renaissance shaped what came to be known as the Jazz Age.
Second Wave Feminists of the 60s and 70s

The feminist movement was a critical response to the “return to normalcy” of the 1950s, including female domesticity.

➢ De Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* (1949)
➢ Friedan’s *Feminine Mystique* (1963)
➢ National Organization for Women (1966)

**NOW’s Purpose** is to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men.
WOMEN’S RIGHTS EXPANDED THROUGH THE 1960s

• **1963**: The Equal Pay Act promises equitable wages for the same work.
• **1964**: Title VII of Civil Rights Act prohibits sex discrimination.
• **1965**: Supreme Court grants married couples right to use contraception.
• **1968**: President Johnson signs order prohibiting sex discrimination by government contractors and requiring affirmative action plans.
• **1969**: California adopts the nation's first "no fault" divorce law.
• **1972**: Supreme Court grants right to birth control to unmarried couples.
• **1973**: Roe v. Wade makes abortion legal.
• **1974**: Housing and credit discrimination against women outlawed.
The “problem that had no name”

• “We can no longer ignore that voice . . that says: ‘I want something more than my husband and my children and my home.’”

• Friedan reflected upon being forced to drop her career by presumptions about becoming a wife and mother.

• She saw housewives desperately unhappy with their lives, including their sex lives.

• Women should raise their awareness and aspirations beyond mother and mate to seek personal fulfillment through meaningful careers.
“The Second Wave of Feminism”

Martha Weinman Lear characterized “What these women want” in 1968

- A “total change . . . to achieve total equality”
- No woman should be brought up to be a housewife.
- More women are working—for 60% of what men earn.
- the sexuality of women is a ”sort of socially acceptable whoredom.”
- The “institution of marriage has the same influence as . . . slavery”
Third-Wave Feminists diverged from middle-class feminists’ emphasis on equal rights.

Kat Millett was described by *Time* as the “Mao Tse-Tung of Women’s Liberation,” and the *New York Times* termed her the “high priestess of feminism.”
Sexuality is political because it involves “power-structured relationships.”

We [can] alter the course of human history... by affecting an entire change of consciousness... But we cannot do this or solve racial and economic crimes unless we end the oppression of all people—unless we end the idea of violence, of dominance, of power... —unless we realize that a revolution in sexual policy is not only part of but basic to any real change in the quality life. Social and cultural revolution in America and the world depend on a change of consciousness of which a new relationship between the sexes and a new definition of humanity and human personality are an integral part.
“It was Ms. Millett’s book that made us feminists.”
Carol Adams NYT 9/7/17

“It felt so liberating to realize that we could follow her lead. We could take this fundamental insight to our jobs, our schools, our marriages — and to politics itself. Theory mattered. It was capable of propelling real change.”

In the preface to Sexual Politics, Millett recounts that “we were dedicated to scholarship, loved it, believed in it so much that we dreamed about it out loud, lying on someone’s rug uptown and outlining a curriculum freed of sexual prejudice, a whole new way to see history, literature, economics, psychology, political events. We were beginning to invent women’s studies.”
We “take turns bringing questions to the meeting (like, Which do/did you prefer, a girl or a boy baby or no children, and why? What happens to your relationship if your man makes more money than you? Less than you?). Then we go around the room answering the questions from our personal experiences. Everybody talks that way. At the end of the meeting we try to sum up and generalize from what’s been said and make connections.”

These groups help participants see “that personal problems are political problems.”
Our primary task right now is to awaken ‘class’ consciousness in ourselves and others.

Carol Hamisch

Our feelings are . . . political.

Our feelings will lead us to our theory, our theory to our action, our feelings about that action to new theory and then to new action.

The seeds of a new and beautiful world society lie buried in the consciousness of this very class which has been abused and oppressed since the beginning of . . . history.
ME TOO

ARE YOU A FEMINIST?

Was your consciousness raised in the 60s and 70s?

What does that even mean?

Do you see gender as political?

Do you think feminists helped us view the personal as political?
Who’s American, Whose America?

- Immigration surges have sparked nativist reactions.
- Our era closely parallels the divisions of a century ago.
- Until 1965, immigration policies were based on race and ethnicity.
- Policies then shifted to humanitarian, economic, and political priorities.
- That shift helped build consensus, while racial frames created disabling divisions.
Number of Immigrants and Their Share of the Total U.S. Population, 1850-2017

- Immigrants as a percentage of the U.S. population
- Number of immigrants

https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/immigrant-population-over-time
Immigration Surges Have Sparked Nativist Frames

- **1820-1860**: Irish—mostly Catholic—were about one-third of all immigrants. About five million Germans also immigrated.

- **1849**: The Know-Nothing Party became the first anti-immigrant party.

- **1880-1920**: More than 20 million immigrants, mostly from South and East Europe, including 4 million Italians and 2 million Jews.

- **1892**: Ellis Island becomes the first immigration station. More than 12 million entered through Ellis between 1892 and 1954.

The Gilded Age a Century Ago Mirrored Our Own Times

• 1907: U.S. immigration peaks at 1.3 million entrances through Ellis Island alone.

• 1910: About three-quarters of New Yorkers were new immigrants and first generation.

• 1917: Immigration Act includes a literacy requirement and halts Asian immigration.

• 1924: Immigration Act limits immigration to 2% of current US demographic groups. Illegal immigration increases dramatically. The Border Patrol is established.
Madison Grant’s *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916)

- Influential proponent of the idea that immigration was contributing to “racial suicide” of whites
- In a letter to Grant, Hitler characterized *Passing* as his bible
- Praised by several US Presidents and leaders
- Major influence on immigration and miscegenation laws

“It was America that taught us a nation should not open its doors equally to all nations,” Adolph Hitler, *NYT*, 1938

These immigrants adopt the language of the native American, they wear his clothes, they steal his name, and they are beginning to take his women, but they seldom adopt his religion or understand his ideals and while he is being elbowed out of his own home the American looks calmly abroad and urges on others the suicidal ethics which are exterminating his own race.
“Whose Country is This?”

There are racial considerations too grave to be brushed aside for any sentimental reasons. Biological laws tell us that certain people will not mix or blend. The Nordics propagate themselves successfully. With other races, the outcome shows deterioration on both sides. Quality of mind and body suggest that observance of ethnic law is as great a necessity to a nation.

Calvin Coolidge, 1921
• **March 1790**: Naturalization Act for any free white person of “good character” in US for two years
• **August 1790**: First census finds 3.9 million Americans are mostly English, though nearly 20% of Americans are of African heritage.
• **1882**: The Chinese Exclusion Act. Although only 0.002% of population, they are blamed for low wages.
• **1907**: Japan agrees to limit emigration to business and professional men.
• **1917**: Immigration Act establishes literacy requirement and bars Asian immigration.
• **May 1924**: Nationality quotas grant visas to 2% of each nationality in the US, with Britain, Ireland, and Germany accounting for 70% of all immigrants. Asians are forbidden entry
• **1924**: Illegal immigration increases. The U.S. Border Patrol is. Many border crossers are Asian immigrants.
• **1942**: Bracero Program allows Mexican farm workers to enter on temporary basis until 1964.
• **1942**: Executive Order 9066 forces relocation of 120,000 Japanese Americans in internment camps

[https://www.history.com/topics/immigration/immigration-united-states-timeline](https://www.history.com/topics/immigration/immigration-united-states-timeline)
The civil rights era brought an end to racially based immigration policies

While the exclusion of Asian immigrants was ended in 1952, civil rights doctrines and the cold war combined to bring an end to national origin quotas.

• **1965:** The Immigration and Nationality Act ends quotas based on national origin, which President Johnson characterizes as “un-American.”

• For the first time, preference is given to family reunification and skilled immigrants.

• Over three million refugees from Cuba, East Asia, and Eastern Europe are given priority as part of Cold War politics. Legal Asian immigrants quadruple
Apprehensions on US-Mexico border

Total number of migrants by US financial year (2000-2018)

Source: US Customs and Border Protection agency

“The America we know and love doesn't exist anymore. Massive demographic changes have been foisted on the American people, and they are changes that none of us ever voted for, and most of us don't like ... this is related to both illegal and legal immigration, which of course the progressives love.”

Laura Ingraham, 8/10/18

“White nationalist, White supremacist, Western civilization—how did that language become offensive?”

Congressman Steve King, 1/10/19
1980s saw bipartisan efforts to make immigration work.

- **Refugee Act of 1980** provided federal assistance to immigrants from wars and natural disaster (though federal funding inadequate).

- **Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986**
  - Employee sanctions to restrict unauthorized workers
  - Increased funding for border security
  - “Amnesty” for illegal immigrants with more than 5 years residency
  - Increases for temporary farmworkers

- **Immigration Act of 1990** revised policy to prioritize skilled workers over family unification to increase competitiveness
1990s saw surge of anti-immigration efforts

- California Proposition 187 barred illegal immigrants from education and social services.
- Bipartisan but not uncontested support for reduced immigration under President Clinton
- NAFTA trade bill in 1992 attempted to foster economic development in hemisphere
- 1996 New federal provisions to require reporting and limits on social programs for recent legal and illegal immigrants
- Campaign and initiative debates on immigration adopt racialized frames that deepen divisions
• The West is dying. . . Not since the Black Death . . . has there been a graver threat to the survival of Western civilization.

• Uncontrolled immigration threatens to . . . convert America into a conglomeration of peoples with almost nothing in common — not history, heroes, language, culture, faith, or ancestors. Balkanization beckons.

• In half a lifetime, many Americans have seen their God dethroned, their heroes defiled, their culture polluted, their values assaulted, their country invaded, and themselves demonized as extremists and bigots for holding on to beliefs Americans have held for generations.

• This struggle . . . is the new divide between Left and Right; this struggle will define what it means to be a conservative. This is the cause of the twenty-first century and the agenda of conservatism for the remainder of our lives.
“White Genocide” Frame

In this frame, “Whites” are being “replaced” with rising Non-white immigration and birthrates. This frame is used to polarize the public and raise racial hatred among Whites. This frame is often used in tandem with racialized anti-immigrant frames, including attacks on Muslims,

J.M. Berger’s “Alt History,” *Atlantic* (2016)

START institute’s studies of mass murders’ manifestos and alt right interpretive frames
Americans Used to Support a Border Wall. What Changed Their Minds?

Emily Ekins, *The Federalist* (1/19).

The Border Wall Has Become a Symbol:.....
In the minds of many Americans—although not all—the wall has become symbolic of attitudes toward immigrants and racial minorities. As political scientists may put it, the wall has become “racialized.” ....When Trump announced his bid for the presidency, he declared Mexico is “sending people that have lots of problems…. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.” ....
Can we bridge these divisive frames?

Consider the gap between these opposing frames:

- Immigrants are illegals, and aliens should not be granted amnesty because they are criminals who threaten our way of life.
- Immigrants are migrants who deserve our support because they are seeking safety and opportunity and will contribute to our economic and cultural vitality.

Historically, the gap between these views has been bridged by characterizing immigrants as undocumented workers and refugees seeking freedom from communist tyranny. What bridges are available to us now?
Do you view immigration as a threat, an obligation, or something else entirely?

➢ How do you frame the challenges of immigration—as an economic, cultural, and/or social issue?

➢ How do you understand the racial dimensions?

➢ How open minded do you think you are to consider different ways of framing this and other issues?
Lessons to Be Learned: Exercise Your Civic Imagination

Step back and reflect on the historic conflicts in which Americans have had to deliberate on their differences.

Assume that people of good will can come to opposing views in conflicts over basic values.

Acknowledge that systemic inequities are a part of our history and our democracy has been strengthened by addressing them.

Explore those oppositions and inequities by trying to understand varied viewpoints.
Lessons to Be Learned: Exercise Your Civic Imagination

- Get involved in grassroots organizing and the civic life of your community
- Consider how power differences factor into your personal life and your personal relationships in ways that mirror social hierarchies
- Engage in consciousness raising by reflecting back over how you have understood politics in evolving ways as your experiences have changed
Four Generations of American Women: Great Progress, Persistent Challenges

By Judith Warner, Emily Baxter, and Milia Fisher

https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2015/05/12/112971/4-generations-of-american-women-great-progress-persistent-challenges
Women of the Silent and Baby Boomer generations have lived through historic growth in the possibilities facing women and eras of tremendous economic opportunity.
Generation X was the first generation of college grads to earn less than its predecessor. Many Millennials came of age in the Great Recession and launched their careers in a time of job scarcity. Burdened with more student debt than Generation X, they are likely to be less well off than their parents.

Women of the Silent and Baby Boomer generations have lived through historic growth in the possibilities facing women and eras of tremendous economic opportunity.
Silent Generation
Born between 1928 and 1945

➢ Some mothers of second-wave feminists were born when women—married or unmarried—could not access contraception, serve on juries, or even get a credit card without a husband’s permission.

➢ Only 11 percent of working women had a college degree.
Baby Boomers
Born between 1946 & 1964

➢ Older women of this generation came of age during feminist and Vietnam protests. They were professional pioneers and overtook men in college degrees.

➢ In 1990, when Baby Boomers were between ages 26 and 44:
  • Women made up 45% of the labor force.
  • Just over 25% of working women had college degrees.
  • Women were 17% of physicians and 22% of lawyers—up from less than 3% of lawyers in 1970.
Generation Xers were raised to believe girls could do anything and inherited backlash against the 1960s. Older members of this cohort—like younger Boomers—are more conservative than others in their generation.

46% grew up with both parents working—and unprecedented divorce rates.

When Generation Xers graduated, women were earning more bachelor’s than men.
Millennials
Born between 1981 & 1996

➢ Trends toward intensive parenting and changes in technology mean young people entering adulthood are much closer with their parents: In 2013, 67% of mothers and 51% of fathers were in daily contact with their grown child—ages 18 to 29.

➢ The oldest Millennials are 39 and many are parents, though they are marrying and having children later than previous generations.
How does your generation’s politics differ from the political experiences of your grandmother, mother, and daughter?

How have your daughter’s, mother’s and grandmother’s generations been shaped by their distinctive experiences?

How can we talk about that, for isn’t dialogue the essence of democracy?

Can we talk?

How has your generation’s politics evolved over your lifetime?

The 100 Years of Beauty Project

https://petapixel.com/2013/05/14/four-generations-of-women-captured-in-a-single-family-portrait/
• All I'm saying is simply this, that all life is interrelated, that somehow we're caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. For some strange reason, I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. You can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.

• *Martin Luther King Jr.*, [Methodist Student Leadership Conference Speech](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther_King_Jr._speeches), 1964
Let America be America again. Let it be the dream it used to be. Let it be the pioneer on the plain Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed— Let it be that great strong land of love Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)