

**TEMPORAL NEWS FRAMES AND JUDGMENT: THE HILLARY
CLINTON EMAIL SCANDAL**

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ABSTRACT

Many scholars have studied the framing of political figures in the news with a focus on how discourse about those figures is circulated through various mediums (Miller et al 1998; Parry-Giles 2000; Parry-Giles 2014). Building from this work my research explores moments in the ‘life’ of a single actor within a narrative unfolding over time, and the cumulative impact those moments have in shaping public impressions about that actor. Employing critical discourse methods and a granular intertextual approach on 510 news stories from the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* from March 2015 to November 2016, I trace how Hillary Clinton was appraised during news coverage of her use/abuse of her private email server during her tenure as Secretary of State. To do so I rely heavily on the appraisal framework of linguists J.R. Martin and P.R. White’s (2005). My analysis identifies three critical discourse phases surrounding coverage of Clinton’s email server, with each phase defined by the revelation of new information and a spike in articles reporting on that information. The phases consist of 1) When it was first reported that Clinton used a private email server as Secretary of State, 2) When the FBI opened their investigation into Clinton’s private email server use, and 3) When Clinton’s presidential campaign ended in November 2016. I show how the reporting in the aggregate creates a “swarm” of coverage that moves across phases from deference to implicit attacks that frame her actions in a suspicious light. Moreover, I show how implicit attacks, left unaddressed and unrepaired in one phase, may pave the way for others to adopt more explicit negative conclusions about Clinton’s character in a subsequent phase. While this study is mainly descriptive, I conclude by considering the extent to which this phenomenon may be gendered and propose future projects to study that question more centrally.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2014, while reviewing documents requested by the United States' House Select Committee on Benghazi, lawyers from the State Department came across emails from former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's personal email account. At the time the House Select Committee was tasked with investigating the September 11th, 2012 attack on the U.S. Diplomatic Mission in Benghazi, Libya. To ensure it received all relevant records, the State Department requested emails and other documents from all former Secretaries of State going back to Madeleine Albright in the later 1990's and early 2000's. Later, on March 3rd, 2015 the *New York Times* published the first official story announcing that Hillary Clinton used a private email account to conduct government business during her four-year tenure as Secretary of State. At the time Clinton had not yet announced her bid for President, but many speculated about the possibility of her running in the 2016 election. The revelation that Clinton used a private email server to conduct government business was reported on intensely for a month, kick-starting a nearly two year scandal that would have repercussions for Clinton in the 2016 election as new information was brought to light.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the early press reports in framing Clinton's private email usage. Framing, as Robert Entman (1993) explains involves selection and salience:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described (52).

When it comes to long-running media narratives in particular, early frames guide not only how initial information is perceived, but influence the processing of all succeeding information

(Entman 1991; 7). Framing in this regard is tied deeply to issues of representation—how actors in a news story are construed, and, through these construals, how actors are implicitly judged in ethical terms.

Eventually, reports about Clinton's email use coincided with her announcement that she would run for president, forcing her to answer questions about past communication practices just as she was trying to launch a new campaign narrative. Clinton was not only forced to discuss her past, but coverage of her private email use also dominated the United States' 2016 presidential election cycle; so much so that many believe coverage of the issue hurt her in the election (Patterson 2016; Wemple 2017; Watts & Rothschild 2017). Given how significant this coverage appears to have been in determining a U.S. presidential election, it is crucial to understand exactly what it entailed. What frames were used to portray Clinton, her past conduct with a private email server, and her current handling of questions about the affair? What did this framing imply about Clinton's character and, particularly, her potential to manage the ethical responsibilities of the U.S. presidency? Of course, early work on Clinton has analyzed historical representations in television and print (Parry-Giles 1996, 2000; Kohrs Campbell 1998), including the double-bind women in leadership face (Jamieson 1995), as well as more recent sexist representations during coverage of senate and presidential elections (Anderson 2017, 2017, 2002; Kaufer et al 2012; Carlin & Winfrey 2009; Shepard 2009; Parry-Giles & Blair 2000) and charges of inauthenticity (Parry-Giles 2014, 2001). However, at this time no rhetorician has looked at the Clinton private email controversy and how it relates to framing beliefs about how a public figure ought to behave. My research fills this gap by examining moments in the 'life' of a single narrative over time. In concert with other studies that have taken a diachronic approach to studying news (Carvalho 2008) and the recontextualization of discourse (Campbell 1990; Wodak

1999; Kaufer et al. 2012), I examine one developing narrative over time to suggest that the manner in which media frame Clinton is done, not through their own singular voice, but rather by bringing together an array of voices and positions that combine to produce her character image. Examining one narrative (Clinton's private email server use) allowed me to focus my data collection and analysis on the orchestration of those voices over time. What interests me is the impact these moments in the 'life' of a single news narrative had in shaping our beliefs about not just how Clinton behaved when using a private email server, but how she *ought* to behave—as a presidential candidate and as a woman.

This tension between how she behaved and how she *ought to* behave would inevitably introduce(or more likely re-introduce) a problem all too familiar to public figures, and particular to Clinton—how would this impact how she is perceived by the public and how she is represented in public discourse?

Several trends persist in scholarship about how public figures are represented and perceived. People's perceptions of public figures and how those perceptions are shaped are often discussed in terms of *image making*, or sometimes *political image making*. In many instances, the subjects of the image making process are political candidates. Thus attention has been given to the process through which rhetors and their surrogates represent candidates visually in campaign films and verbally in autobiographies (Kaufer and Parry-Giles 2017; Parry-Giles and Kaufer 2017). Yet, scholars have begun to recognize that the image making process is not just about how a rhetor chooses to control their own image (verbal or visual)—that in fact, rhetors have little control over how they are seen by the public. By nature of their work in public service, public figures frequently appear in the news—that is, their behavior is often reported on, so public

perception is typically mediated through frames presenting actions and character traits of those public figures. (Kaufer et al 2012; Kaufer and Parry-Giles 2017).

Rhetoricians also recognize mainstream news media discourse plays a pivotal role in the portrayal of public figures (Miller et al 1998; Parry-Giles 2000; Parry-Giles 2014). This work often asks how the news media frames political leaders and how images constructed by the press “reflect upon and express the character of U.S politics” (Parry-Giles & Parry-Giles 2002). Inquiries of this kind are important because they help us better understand the media’s role in constituting representations of public figures and the influence media outlets may have in shaping how politicians are perceived by the public. Building from this, my project provides further granularity to understanding the press’ role in this process by focusing solely on the coverage of a single issue over time, and considers alternatives to how we can describe this phenomenon.

In order to account for the unique characteristics of media discourse I also situate my work within the theory of intertextuality. Intertextuality is the notion that all texts contain elements of other texts and cannot be made in isolation. Using an intertextual theory to examine the press’ discourse highlights this dialogism by drawing attention to the dialogue between the voice of the author (journalist) and the other voices in the text. Bakhtin (1981) reminds us that language is characterized by its own meaning and value in the sense that every utterance is “entangled, shot through with shared thoughts, points of view, alien values judgments and accents” (276). Thus an intertextual frame helps us see that voices in news discourse often engage in a struggle over meaning—wherein the author may attribute information to an outside source (“State Department officials say”) or entertain possibilities that invite alternative perspectives (“It’s possible Clinton did not know the emails were classified at the time”). In

addition, as Fairclough (2003) and others have noted, it is also important to consider which, if any, voices are included and excluded in a text. In particular, an author's selectiveness can reveal the kinds of assumptions on which the journalist (and perhaps whom he/she acknowledges) operate. Understanding these assumptions is key to not only studying how the media frames Clinton, but also how the media orchestrates a collection of voices (including Clinton's own voice) to create a composite picture of who she is. The extent to which the voices brought together create a dominant view of Clinton or whether they diverge to create contrasting images of her is partly determined by the rhetorical artistry of journalists—a consequence of how journalists select, manage, and recontextualize voices and positions. Ultimately, their voice management, so to speak, is likely a key to the image-making, and something an intertextual perspective helps me discover.

Furthermore, intertextuality not only helps us examine competing voices within a single text, but also gets at transformations that occur *across* texts by insisting that analysts look at texts in relation to one another (Oddo 2014). According to Bakhtin (1981), discourse is located in a world filled with prior utterances and language that is “shot through with intentions and accents (193)—each utterance is “a link in the chain of speech communication” (1986; 93). This chain represents more than a single communication between speaker and audience—it represents the complex interaction of past, present, and future texts. Examining this complex interaction is necessary when considering the multitude of voices acknowledged in media discourse.

Finally, I engage with scholarship from the broad framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA has been established as a critical approach that can be used within many different disciplines and methods to uncover the connection between discursive practices and larger social structures in relation to struggles of power and abuse (van Dijk 1988; 1996; 2015). While I do

not claim to perform a critical discourse analysis, I am inspired by the study from CDA scholar Anabela Carvalho. According to Carvalho (2008), one of the gaps left to fill in CDA is research that explores moments in the “life” of a news text, while also taking into account institutional and sociocultural contexts surrounding the media discourse produced on a particular topic (16). While others have analyzed moments in the life of a speech (Oddo 2014), my dissertation will analyze the life of a single public issue over approximately a year and a half. In order to understand how a story about Clinton is told through this news narrative I identify “critical discourse moments” (Chilton 1987; Carvalho 2008). According to Carvalho (2008), “critical discourse moments are periods that involve specific happenings, which may challenge the ‘established’ discursive positions” surrounding politically and socially relevant events (166). Drawing from these “critical discourse moments,” I explore moments in the “life” of a news story, while also taking into account institutional and sociocultural contexts surrounding the media discourse produced on a particular topic. Therefore, I draw on this framework in order to track not only the revelatory moments in the “life” of a news narrative, but also the effect those moments have in creating appraisals of Hillary Clinton during her presidential campaign. These moments, broadly defined are:

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
First reports that Clinton used a private email server as Secretary of State	The FBI opens their investigation into Clinton private email	Clinton’s presidential campaign ended

In order to identify and understand how images are constituted in the press’ discourse, my project employs a micro-discursive analysis. Using ProQuest’s online database and the search terms “Hillary Clinton,” “Email,” and “Secretary of State Clinton,” I collected a corpus of 510 newspaper articles from *The New York Times* (NYT) and *The Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) published

between March 3rd, 2015 when it was first revealed that Clinton used a private email server, up until November 8th, 2016 when the presidential campaign ended. After I collected the initial corpus I organized the coverage by month, tracking the frequency of articles about Clinton's email use, as well as the prominence of those articles in the newspaper. Prominence refers to front page stories, stories that appear in multiple sections of a newspaper, and times when the issue is covered by multiple outlets simultaneously. For instance, Figure 1 and 2 below show how I organized the coverage for the *NYT* and *WSJ*, respectively, and the patterns that began to emerge for when reporting tended to increase in quantity.

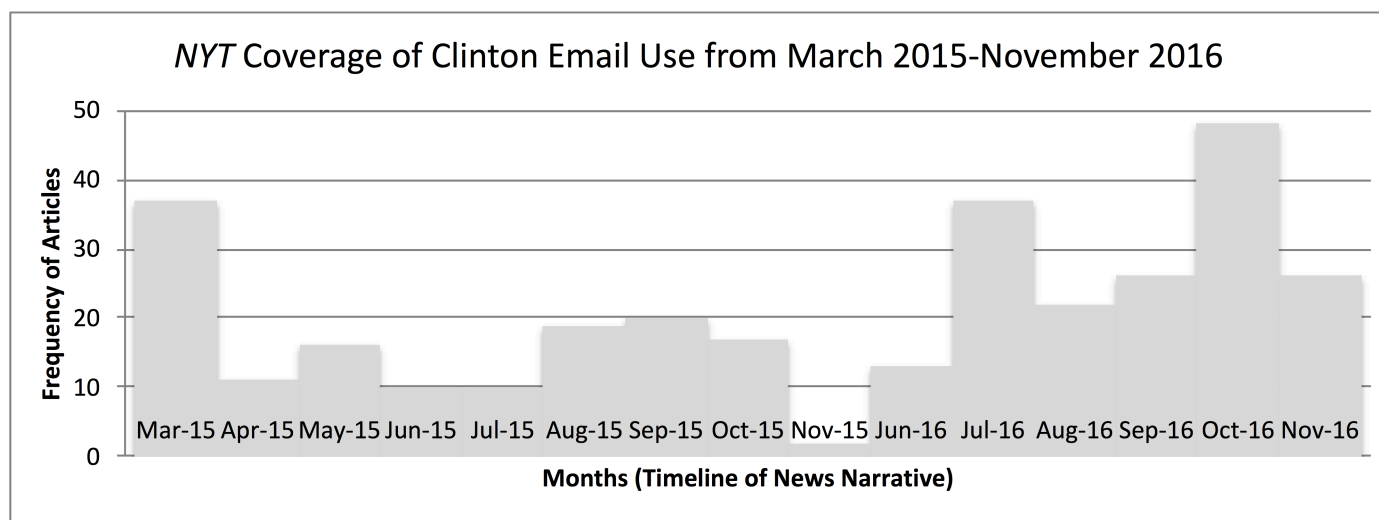


Figure 1: Frequency of coverage in the *NYT* revealed three points in the narrative where reports increased in quantity.

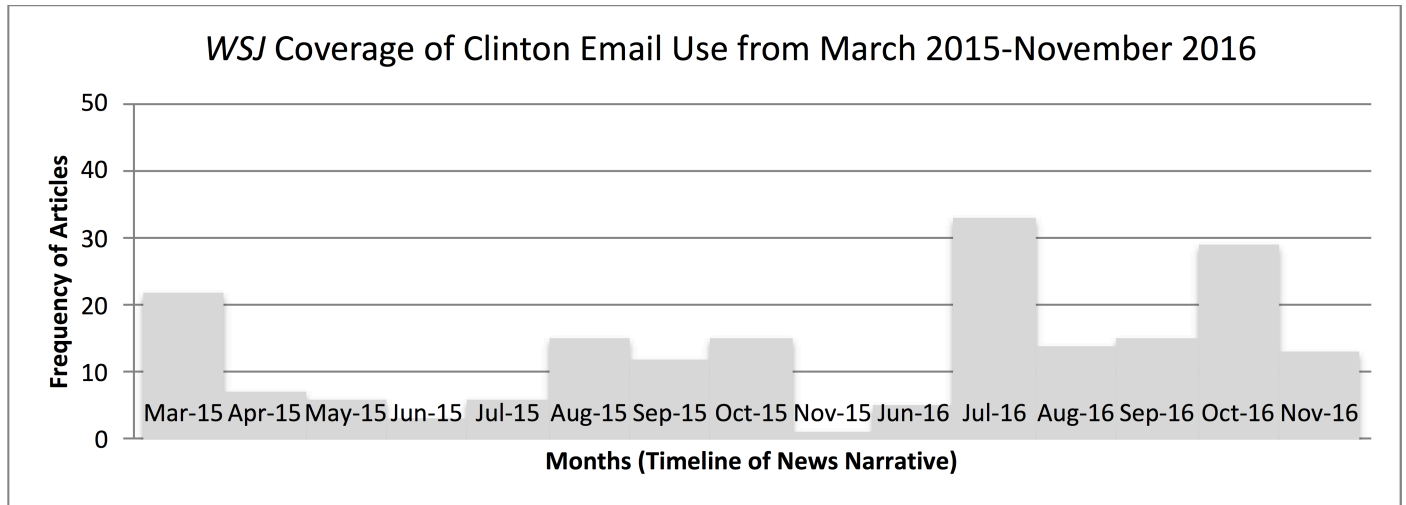


Figure 2: Frequency of coverage in the *WSJ* revealed three points in the narrative where reports increased in quantity.

Using the graph as a guide I then did a close reading of the articles that appeared in the three distinct peaks (March 2015-May 2015, July 15-October 15, and July 2106-November 16). As I read I continued to narrow the corpus to articles whose topic was primarily Clinton’s email server use (as opposed to articles that only mentioned her server use in passing). My analysis eventually revealed three critical discourse moments surrounding the coverage of Clinton’s email server when the frequency of coverage was highest, and when new information was brought to light.

Following Oddo (2014) and Klein (2016), I take a micro-discursive approach to unpack how Clinton is appraised in news discourse narratives—specifically in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. To do so I employ the qualitative hand-coding methods proposed by linguists Martin and White (2005). In their book, *The Language of Evaluation*, Martin and White propose an “Appraisal Framework” approach, warranting researchers to analyze the language of evaluation and stance. Their framework allows analysts to consider the role evaluative meaning plays in the spread of ideologies, the creation of textual styles and authorial identities, and in the “negotiation of speaker/listener, writer/reader relationships” (Martin and White 1).

Specifically, the appraisal framework considers three dimensions of evaluation: attitude, engagement, and graduation. For me, attitude and engagement are particularly useful. Attitude is concerned with emotional reactions (*affect*), judgments of behaviors (judgment), and evaluation of things (**appreciation**). For example:

By the end of the semester, I was *desperate* for a break.
 She has always been honest.
 The speaker's analysis was **clear**.

The second dimension, engagement, considers language that positions the speaker/writer among different value positions, and potential responses to those positions. In other words, it concerns “sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around options in discourse,” including 1) the way rhetors position themselves among the other voices in their texts—whether the rhetor stands with, against, or neutral to other speakers and their value positions (93), and 2) the way rhetors “manage their relationship with putative audiences by signaling their ‘tolerance for alternative viewpoints’” (Oddo 85, qtd Martin and White 96). For example:

The audience said the speaker's analysis was clear.
 Yet, she has always been honest, some have alleged.

As I show through this dissertation, how voices are attributed or acknowledged is also important because it reveals how journalists act as mediators between public figures and the press, as well as how they position themselves and their audiences with regard to the events on which they report.

The mediation and positioning of voices in discourse thus necessitates a dialogic perspective which accounts for whether assertions are monoglossic or heteroglossic. Monoglossic assertions make no recognition of dialogic alternatives, meaning they are bare assertions that signal zero tolerance for alternative positions (e.g. *Emailing classified material is illegal*). On the other hand, utterances are considered heteroglossic when they entertain or

otherwise acknowledge dialogic alternatives (e.g. *Emailing classified material may be illegal if intentionally sent over a private server.*) As Martin and White (2005) explain, “Thus solidarity can turn, not on questions of agreement/disagreement, but on tolerance for alternative viewpoints, and the community into which the writer/speaker aligns the reader can be one in which the diversity of viewpoints is recognized as natural and legitimate” (96). Journalists can sanction or discredit viewpoints depending on how they express attitudes and align themselves with (or against) the sources they include in their reports. Their reporting helps indicate which behaviors and viewpoints are seen as socially sanctioned. For this project, it informs how we are supposed to view Clinton’s behavior.

The expression of attitudes is further complicated by being either explicitly inscribed or implicitly invoked. Sometimes, as Oddo (2014) explains, “attitudes are *explicitly inscribed* in a text via core evaluative vocabulary” (51). For example, the phrase, “Clinton’s explanations were clear” is a positive judgment of appreciation. Other times attitudes may also be *implicitly invoked* meaning the attitude is not signaled as precisely, as in the phrase, “Clinton’s explanations were supported with evidence” (an invoked positive appraisal of appreciation). In either positive or negative valence, what may be implicitly invoked can serve as a threat or warning about someone’s behavior. At stake in either explicit or implicit evaluations are the kinds of behavioral values that get legitimized through the discourse. Especially with judgment appraisals, journalists help establish values regarding how a person should behave—what is appropriate or inappropriate.

Ultimately, my work reveals the power of the press to shape beliefs in ways that would typically be unseen. That is, our understanding of the relationship between explicit and implicit judgments is still incomplete. Further, while we all know that the press shapes public beliefs, I

show *how* the press shapes beliefs—often through subtle wording that allows audiences to draw certain inferences and not others. Moreover, I show that the seeding of unrefuted implicit arguments about Clinton’s behavior in one phase of a story may pave the way for others to adopt more explicit negative conclusions about Clinton’s character. As we lead into a new election season, the stakes remain high: political news coverage, particularly of female figures, ought to be critically examined. My dissertation serves as a necessary reminder of that fact, by uncovering how micro-discursive features of the news can shape not only beliefs about specific female candidates but normative ideas about how women ought to conduct themselves in the public sphere.

While this is not primarily a project in feminist rhetoric, there are plenty of ways feminist concerns can, should, and must be raised. Feminist rhetorical scholars specifically have helped illuminate how the public sphere is hostile towards women and minority groups, noting ways in which the public sphere is constructed as being male, fit, and able-bodied (Tomlinson 2009; Johnson 2014). In the following chapters I raise these feminist concerns where appropriate but also leave room for future projects wherein I may address the limitations of my dissertation.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 2: Deference in Tradition

Chapter 2 takes interest in the complexities of what counts as regulations by considering what happened to Clinton in 2014 regarding her emails exchanges relevant to the attack in Benghazi, Libya. My analysis in this chapter serves to first understand how Clinton was appraised during the first narrative phase, and second to offer insight into how she was simultaneously shown deference and was negatively evaluated. I argue that journalists in the first

narrative phase use explicit and implicit judgments to establish how Clinton was *expected* to behave. Specifically, I demonstrate the micro-discursive mechanisms used to make implicit negative judgments against Clinton in order to imply how she should (but did not) behave, building expectations that would be cemented in later phases of the scandal.

Chapter 3: “Public Unfitness”

Chapter 3 draws on Carvalho’s theory of critical discourse moments as a way to understand the significance of moments in a news narrative six months following the initial revelation of Clinton’s private email server. I analyze the intertextual appraisals of Clinton in stories on each of the following events: 1) The FBI’s opening of its investigation, 2) The FBI’s sorting of messages recovered from Clinton’s server, 3) Clinton’s formal apology, and 4) The Benghazi Committee hearing occurs. Compared to the first narrative phase in Chapter 2, the deference previously shown to Clinton is now largely weakened and/or lost entirely in some cases. Meanwhile, claims about fitness, veracity, and propriety are often tied to presumptions about how women ought to behave in the public sphere, and imply Clinton is an unfit public official.

Chapter 4: “Performing Due Diligence”

As in previous chapters, one of my goals in Chapter 4 is to reveal how a granular approach to analyzing news discourse as it circulates can describe how the mainstream media manage to maintain an aura of objectivity while nevertheless painting Clinton in a negative light. A second goal is to better understand the use of innuendo as a rhetorical device to entertain negative judgments, and to document, across time, the implications those innuendos have for leading audiences to believe the worst about someone. I analyze the coverage of Clinton in the third and

final phase, focusing on 1) FBI Director James Comey's multiple interventions, 2) Wikileaks and the possibility of new emails discovered from Anthony Weiner's laptop, and 3) the conclusion of the presidential election. I argue while news coverage focused more explicitly on Comey's intervention in the investigation and political campaign, innuendos about Clinton's lack of fitness to be President are cemented as taken-for-granted assumptions.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In the final chapter I discuss the implications of this case study and point to directions for future work. As I will discuss, this project has several implications. First, methodologically this dissertation has implications for the affordances of using a discourse analytic approach on a corpus, as well as how Martin and White's (2005) appraisal framework can be successfully employed to research the power implicit judgments have in building negative character frames of public figures. Second, for those interested in understanding how character frames develop over time, I review the implications for why rhetoricians ought to consider taking a diachronic approach to examine one developing narrative over time. Third, in addition to reviewing the significance of tracing the development of a narrative over time, I explain the implications this project has for understanding the intertextual role mainstream media plays in framing public figures. Finally, I discuss directions for future work.

CHAPTER 2: DEFERENCE IN TRADITION

Approximately 35 years after the emergence of email as an electronic form of communication, the State Department Foreign Affairs Office updated its manual in 1995 to require that employees be aware of the importance of messages sent by email, and preserve those messages as Federal records. However, at the time it was up to officials to decide which emails should be preserved. Ten years later, in 2005, the State Department Foreign Affairs Office again updated its manual regarding “Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU) information,” stating,

It is the Department’s general policy that normal day-to-day operations be conducted on an authorized AIS [Automated Information System], which has the proper level of security control to provide nonrepudiation, authentication and encryption, to ensure confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the resident information (<https://fam.state.gov/fam/12fam/12fam0540.html>).

Notably, government officials would later disagree about what constituted an authorized AIS, as well as how to ensure proper levels of security control. At this time Clinton was serving at the United States Senator from New York, and communicated primarily with friends and colleagues through her Blackberry phone. Prior to Clinton’s appointment as Secretary of State, in January 2009 a Clinton aide purchased the internet domain name, clintonemail.com from the company Network Solutions in Jacksonville, Florida. A server was then set up in Clinton’s home in Chappaqua, New York, where it hosted the email account used on Clinton’s Blackberry up until that time, with a backup to Platte River Networks (Parti 2015). Next, in Fall 2013, in what appeared to be a response to Guccifer’s hacking¹ of prominent political figures’ social media and

¹ Marcel Lazar Lehel, known as Guccifer, is a Romanian hacker who in February 2013 hacked email and social media accounts of the Bush family and other prominent political figures, including Colin Powell and Sidney

email accounts, the National Archives updated their regulations on the handling of federal records and emails. The update included obligatory language about what employees “should not generally do” and what they “must ensure.” The regulation states:

While agency employees should not generally use personal email accounts to conduct official agency business, there may be times when agencies authorize the use of personal email accounts, such as in emergency situations when Federal accounts are not accessible or when an employee is initially contacted through a personal account. In these situations, agency employees must ensure that all Federal records sent or received on personal email systems are captured and managed in accordance with agency recordkeeping practices. Agency policies and procedures must also ensure compliance with other statutes and obligations, such as FOIA and discovery (National Archives).

The “regulations ensured” –particularly what constitutes “Federal records,” “agency recordkeeping practices,” and compliance with “other statutes and obligations,” would later complicate how Clinton’s private email use was understood by the government, the press, and the general public.

This chapter takes interest in the complexities of what counts as regulations by considering what happened to Clinton in 2014 regarding her emails exchanges relevant to the attack in Benghazi, Libya. In the Summer of 2014, while reviewing documents requested by the House Select Committee on Benghazi, lawyers from the State Department came across emails from Clinton’s personal email account. This led the State Department to request emails and documents relating to her work while in office, as well as from all former Secretaries of State going to back to Madeleine Albright. In December, Clinton lawyers delivered files containing

Blumenthal, eventually leaking memos from Blumenthal to Hillary Clinton regarding the 2012 Benghazi attack.

more than 30,000 emails. Clinton withheld nearly 32,000 emails, saying they were of a personal nature. Months later on March 3rd, 2015 the *New York Times* published the official story announcing that Hillary Clinton used a private email account to conduct government business during her four-year tenure as Secretary of State. At the time Clinton had not yet announced her bid for President (that would happen the next month on April 12th), but many speculated about the possibility of her running in the 2016 presidential election. The revelation that Clinton used a private email server to conduct government business was reported on intensely in the first month, and would continue to be reported on as new information was brought to light.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of these early press reports about Clinton's private email usage. As noted, the reports coincided with Clinton's announcement that would be running for president, forcing her to answer questions about past emails just as she was trying to unveil a new campaign narrative. Additionally, her gender influenced how critics perceived her capacity to follow regulations, serving as a larger criticism of her capacity to serve as president. To be clear, while this project concludes by considering future work that may consider gender more explicitly, I execute a very detailed, descriptive chronological analysis using Martin and White (2005). Specifically, in this chapter I use Martin and White's (2005) appraisal framework analysis to investigate how Hillary Clinton was appraised in early reporting about her use of a private email. I analyze a total of 41 news articles (19 from the *New York Times* and 21 from the *Wall Street Journal*) whose primary topical focus is Clinton's private email server.² The analysis serves several functions. First, it seeks to understand how Clinton was appraised during the first narrative phase, and second to offer insight into how she was simultaneously shown deference and was negatively appraised. Before revealing the specifics of how Clinton was appraised in the

manner previously described, the next section will briefly review the analytic appraisal framework I applied in my analysis.

Appraisal Framework: Attitude and Engagement

To review, Martin and White's (2005) appraisal framework considers three dimensions, two of which are particularly useful for understanding the kinds of attitudes expressed about public figures, and to whom those expressions are attributed. In the preceding Introduction I outlined a thorough description of Martin and White's (2005) appraisal framework, including the two dimensions (attitude and engagement) on which my analysis relies. To recall, **attitude** is concerned with emotional reactions, registers of positive and negative feelings (affect), judgments of behaviors (judgment), and evaluation of things (appreciation). The second dimension, **engagement** considers "sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around options in discourse," meaning 1) the way resources position the speaker/writer within different value positions—whether the rhetor stands with, against, or neutral to other speakers and their value positions (93), and 2) the way rhetors "manage their relationship with putative audiences by signaling their 'tolerance for alternative viewpoints'" (Oddo 85, qtd Martin and White 96). In this way, how writer's voices are attributed or acknowledged is also important because it reveals how journalists act as mediators between public figures and the press, as well as how they position themselves within the discourse. The mediation and positioning of voices in discourse thus necessitates a dialogic perspective which accounts for assertions—that is, language, as either monoglossic or heteroglossia. Monoglossic assertions make no recognition of dialogic alternatives, meaning they are bare assertions that signal zero tolerance for alternative positions

² This corpus was generated by searching ProQuest's database of articles published in the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. Topical relevance was determined by the extent to which Clinton's server use was the

(e.g. *Emailing classified material is illegal*). On the other hand, utterances are considered heteroglossic when they entertain or otherwise acknowledge dialogic alternatives (e.g. *Emailing classified material may be illegal if intentionally sent over a private server.*) As Martin and White (2005) distinguish, a writer's solidarity with the views/positions/values being expressed in a text can turn on "tolerance for alternative viewpoints, and the community into which the writer/speaker aligns the reader can be one in which the diversity of viewpoints is recognized as natural and legitimate" (96). Journalists can sanction or discredit viewpoints depending on how they express attitudes and align themselves with (or against) the sources they include in their reports. Their reporting helps information which behaviors and viewpoints are seen as socially sanctioned. For this project, it informs how we are supposed to view Clinton's behavior, and ultimately, as Chapters 2 and 3 will argue, informs normative beliefs about how figures—particularly female—should behave in the public sphere.

The expression of attitudes is further complicated by being either explicitly inscribed or implicitly invoked. Sometimes, as Oddo (2014) explains, "attitudes are *explicitly inscribed* in a text via core evaluative vocabulary" (51). For example, the phrase, "Clinton's explanations were clear" is a positive judgment of appreciation. Other times attitudes may also be *implicitly invoked* meaning the attitude is not signaled as precisely, as in the phrase, "Clinton's explanations were supported with evidence" (an invoked positive judgment of appreciation). In either positive or negative valence, what may be implicitly invoked can serve as a threat or warning about someone's behavior. At stake in either explicit or implicit evaluations are the kinds of behavioral values that get legitimized through the discourse. Especially with judgment appraisals,

journalists help establish values regarding how a person should behave—what is appropriate or inappropriate.³

The findings of my Phase 1 engagement and attitudinal analysis revealed Clinton is characterized in the following way:

1. Journalists suggest, directly, that Clinton has complied with federal regulations in how she handled her private email use and is capable, yet people are still insecure and dissatisfied with her private email use, and
2. Journalists suggest, indirectly, that she may not have actually followed regulations

Specifically, for both the *New York Times* (NYT) and the *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) the top four judgments about Clinton were positive Capacity and Tenacity, followed by positive and negative Propriety. Figure 1 shows the number of explicitly inscribed judgments made about Clinton, highlighting the judgments made most frequently in this first phase. Note that this graphic does not represent the total number of judgments made—only the judgments made about Clinton.

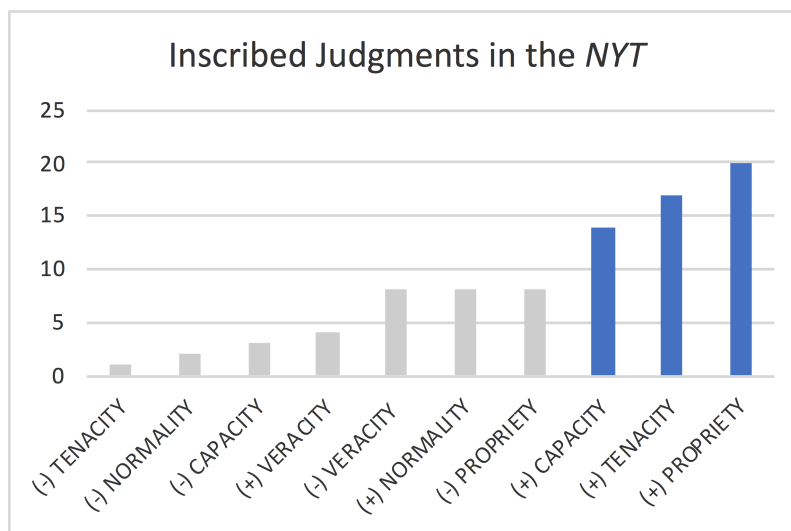


Figure 1: The NYT attributed mostly positive attitudinal judgments about Clinton.

³ Further, on the importance of accounting for these kinds of evaluations, Martin and White (2005) suggest that “such implicit evaluations can introduce an ‘undesirable element of subjectivity into the analysis,’ but

Figure 2 below similarly shows the number of explicitly inscribed judgments made about Clinton in the *WSJ*, highlighting the judgments made most frequently. Again, note this graphic does not represent the total number of judgments made—only the judgments made about Clinton.

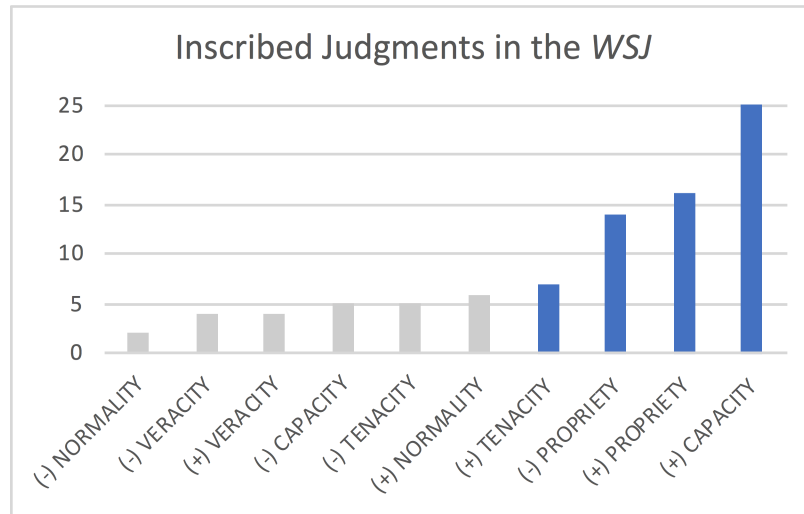


Figure 2: The *WSJ* attributed mostly positive attitudinal judgments about Clinton.

In investigating how journalists inscribe evaluations of Clinton, it is equally imperative to consider what goes beyond direct (inscribed or explicit) evaluations. That is, we must assess the extent to which implicit evaluations are being made—evaluations that might be overlooked in a surface-level reading. Martin and White (2005), when describing what goes beyond direct (or explicit) evaluations, explain, “Beyond this the prosodic nature of the realization of interpersonal meanings such as attitude means that inscriptions tend to color more of a text than their local grammatical environment circumscribes. The inscriptions act as sign-posts, in other words, telling us how to read the ideational selections that surround them” (63). Take for example, the *NYT* report that “The way she [Hillary Clinton] handled her communications was the exact opposite of transparency in public service.” Here the journalist implies a negative judgment

ignoring them is even more problematic since it ‘amounts to a suggestion that ideational meaning is more selected without regard to the attitudes it engenders’” (qtd. in Martin and White, 62) (Oddo 2014, 241).

against Clinton, suggesting that her behavior is not transparent and that she is concealing something. Read enthymematically, we can see the inferred premises and conclusion of such a statement:

- 1) Good public servants handle communications transparently
- 2) Clinton's handling of communication was the exact opposite of transparently in public service
- 3) Thus, Clinton is not a good public servant

The first premise is provided by the audience based on generally agreed upon values of veracity, while the second premise is stated and the conclusion is supplied by the journalist's statement. The conclusion that Clinton is not a good public servant contributes to a judgment of negative veracity. My analysis shows the frequency of invoked judgments made against Clinton, with negative tokens of propriety appearing most prominently. Figures 3 and 4 below show the number of invoked judgments made against Clinton, highlighting the judgments made most frequently.

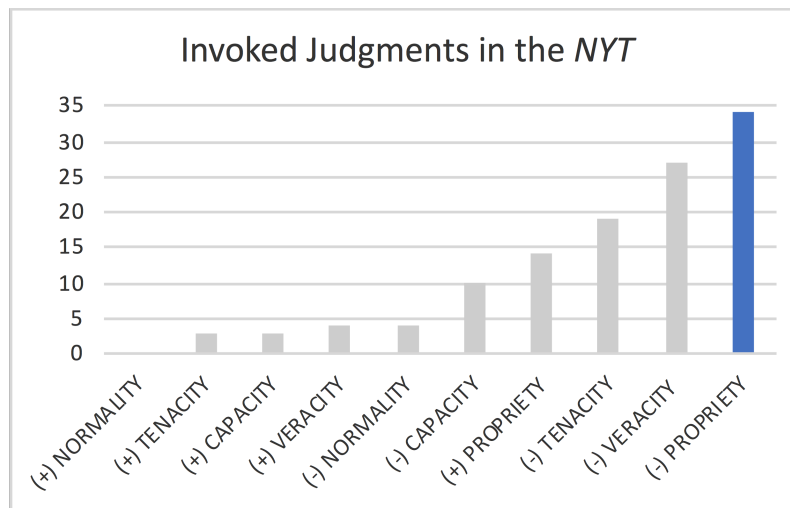


Figure 3: In the *NYT*, of the invoked judgments made against Clinton, negative propriety was the highest.

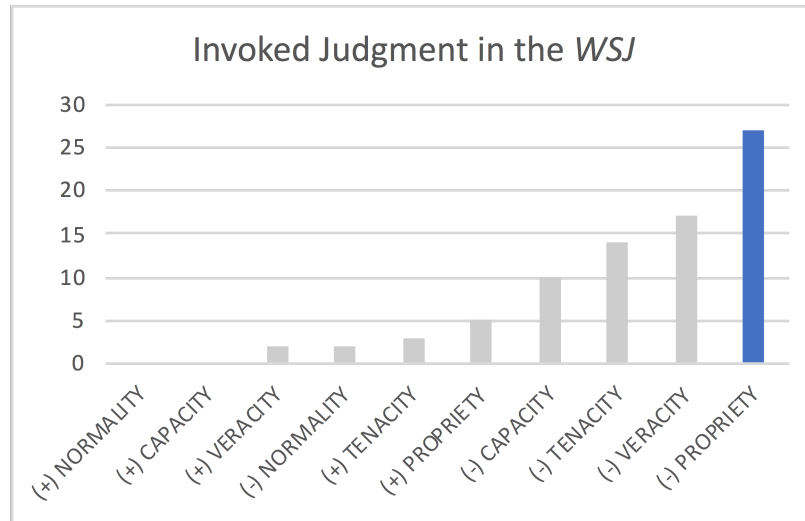


Figure 4: In the *WSJ*, of the invoked judgments made against Clinton, negative propriety was the highest.

Having shared summary of the most frequent attitudes inscribed and invoked, in the following section I offer a discussion of the explicit and implicit judgments made toward Clinton.

Analysis

The following analysis relies on a dialogic perspective, which accounts for the diverse range of voices in a text. As Martin and White (2005) articulate, a dialogic perspective:

...leads us to attend to the nature of the relationship which the speaker/writer is presented as entering into with ‘prior utterances in the same sphere’—with those other speakers who have previously taken a stand with respect to the issue under consideration, especially when, in so speaking, they have established some socially significant community of shared belief or value (93).

Attending to these relationships is especially crucial in analyzing news discourse, which captures a multitude of voices. Knowing texts are not formed in isolation (Bakhtin 1981, 1986; Fairclough 2003), their dialogic nature necessitates that we consider not just the direct speaker (i.e. the

journalist), but also other voices that are embedded in the discourse through resources like direct quotation, acknowledgment (“the report states”), and distanced attribution (“sources claimed to have given proof”). In other words, the appraisal is not as simple as a journalist telling us what to think about Clinton’s character; it involves a struggle over meaning where voices (sometimes competing, sometimes working in unison) work to frame and reframe events in the process of telling a narrative. That said, a dialogic perspective also requires us to consider how voices in a text are sourced and to whom they are attributed.

This analysis will first reveal that, on the surface, journalists show deference (as in respect or courteous regard) to Clinton through explicitly positive judgments, sourced most frequently from Clinton and her staff. That is not to say Clinton was never negatively evaluated—certainly negative appraisals were made at this time, but these explicit negative appraisals appeared much less frequently than the positive evaluations. The second, and more revealing finding is the nuanced use of implicit negative judgments against Clinton to imply how Clinton should (but did not) behave. The negative portrait of Clinton is created in two ways: 1) through explicit positive judgments followed by implicit negative judgments, and 2) through explicit negative affect coupled with implicit negative judgments.

Explicitly Inscribed Judgments

During the initial March 2015 reporting of Clinton’s private email use, I found journalists show a surface-level deference toward her through the sourcing of explicit positive judgments, particularly that her behavior is proprietary. In this excerpt, the author reports on an initial response given by a Clinton spokesman on March 3rd, and what some supporters have said. The author writes:

A spokesman for Mrs. Clinton has said she complied with both the letter and spirit of the law and followed precedents set by previous secretaries of state. Some supporters said Mrs. Clinton was justified in holding off in speaking further on the subject while the State Department reviews her emails for release, a process that could take months.

In this passage the writer acknowledges four separate positive judgments of Clinton relating to her dependable nature in following regulations. That she complied with the law (in both the letter and spirit), followed precedent, and was justified in waiting to speak, all support positive evaluations of Clinton's behavior as reliable, rule-abiding, and reasonable. Still, the term "complied" presumes being bound by norms, maintaining a sense of subjectivity. For women, maintaining their should-be subjectivity could be another way to enforce them staying in their 'proper place.' Notable, while the author does not make their own monogloss assertions about Clinton's character, they acknowledge other voices by engaging other voices (what Clinton's spokesman and some supporters said). The attribution is also acknowledged, not distanced, meaning they report what others have "said," as opposed to what "they claimed." The former attributes the speech to the speaker, while the latter indicates to the reader that the writer does not endorse or associate with the perspective of the speaker. Interestingly, the title of the articles refers to Clinton's email use as a "flap," suggesting the writer thinks it was a mistake, yet the sourcing of attitudes overall entertains a positive evaluation of Clinton. Similar sourced positive judgment are also seen in the *NYT*, such as in the excerpt below which reports on Clinton's commentary at a news conference on the use of her private server. In response to this news conference held on March 10th in which Clinton defended her actions, the author writes,

In a news conference she held on Tuesday, and backup documents that her staff circulated the same day, Mrs. Clinton argued that she had complied with those record-keeping rules.

'It was my practice to communicate with State Department and other government officials on their dot-gov accounts so those emails would be automatically saved in the State Department system to meet record-keeping requirements, and that, indeed, is what happened.' Mrs. Clinton said at the news conference. She said she had used the personal account for convenience because she did not want to carry two cellphones.

The phrase “complied with those record-keeping rules” and “to meet record-keeping requirements” are both behaviors in the realm of propriety given they correspond with following rules. Further, each positive judgment is attributed directly to Clinton through the reported speech of “Mrs. Clinton argued that,” and the direct quotation of what “Mrs. Clinton said.” The author here defers to Clinton by acknowledging what she argued and quoting her directly. That the author keeps their reporting dialogically expansive through their attribution of Clinton suggests a courteous regard toward her and how she perceives her behavior as proprietary. That said, it is not entirely surprising that the author presents an impartial position. As we know, some texts operate “under a regime by which it is assumed that it is possible for the speaker/writer to remain aloof from, and unimplicated in, any of the value positions which are contained in attributed material” (Martin and White 115). Had the author amplified the distance between herself and the reported speech by saying, “Clinton claimed to have shown that,” that would have indicated that the author did not want to be aligned with the speaker or take responsibility for what they said. Perhaps for Clinton’s own benefit, her claim that it was her practice to meet record-keeping practices is especially important for her to clarify given the National Archives’ requirement that messages sent or received from government officials be properly preserved.

Implicitly Invoked Judgments

In addition to acknowledging positive judgments of Clinton's behavior in relation to her private server use, journalists also consistently use counters to draw implied negative judgments. Counters are words or phrases that represent "the current proposition as replacing or supplanting, and thereby 'countering' a proposition which would have been expected in its place (Martin and White 120). Examples include, *yet, although, but, however, and even though*. As opposed to the journalist's position articulated in the previous analysis section, there are also ways journalists can indicate either their support or opposition to an attributed value position. One manner is drawing on the use of implied or invoked judgments. In the first article published announcing Clinton's private email account use, the author acknowledges what Clinton and her people are saying in her defense. The author writes:

A spokesman for Mrs. Clinton, Nick Merrill, defended her use of the personal email account and said she has been complying with the "letter and spirit of the rules.

Under federal law, however, letters and emails written and received by federal officials, such as the secretary of state, are considered government records and are supposed to be retained so that congressional committees, historians and members of the news media can find them. There are exceptions to the law for certain classified and sensitive materials.

In the first part of this excerpt the author acknowledges the voice of Nick Merrill, who says Clinton has complied with the "letter and spirit of the rules." Here the ideational meaning selected is the governing of rules, which places this evaluation in the realm of propriety. As Martin and White (2005) remind us, "the selection of ideational meaning is enough to invoke

evaluation, even in the absence of attitudinal lexis that tells us directly how to feel” (62). Those who comply with rule are proprietary, thus this statement is a positive judgment of propriety for Clinton. What follows in the next paragraph is an interesting turn toward Clinton’s potential impropriety. The connective phrase “however” immediately counters the previous judgment and asserts that under federal law “letters and emails written and received by federal officials” are “supposed to be retained.” Thus, an enthymematic analysis reveals a token of impropriety against Clinton, which follows is as follows:

- 1) By law, government records are supposed to be retained
- 2) Clinton used private emails which are not retainable
- 3) In using a private email, Clinton may not have complied with federal law.

Aristotle reminds us that persuasion is not a matter of facts alone; thus “rhetors construct common ground based on audience’s values and identities in a form of reasoning he called the *enthymeme*” (Cloud 2018, 21). To function, this rhetorical syllogism must rely on the shared assumption/common belief that private emails cannot be retained. Even still, it is worthy to note how the author does not take a side; rather, they present the option for the reader to decide—here is what Clinton says, and here is what Federal regulations say. To draw this distinction further, we can consider the difference between the follow statements—the first, what they *could have* said, and the second what the author *did say*:

- (1) A spokesman for Mrs. Clinton, Nick Merrill, defended her use of the personal email account and said she has been complying with the "letter and spirit of the rules."

However, Clinton violated federal law.

- (2) A spokesman for Mrs. Clinton, Nick Merrill, defended her use of the personal email account and said she has been complying with the "letter and spirit of the rules." Under

federal law, however, letters and emails written and received by federal officials, such as the secretary of state, are considered government records and are supposed to be retained. The first provides an unsourced monogloss attitudinal judgment against Clinton in the second sentence, while the second example sources the attitudes implicitly to others (“under federal law”), and further distances the author from the judgment. Thus, by distancing themselves from the judgment, they may still display deference toward Clinton. In following this enthymematic structure, writers may not place Clinton in the context of criticism, thus avoiding a trap of labeling her explicitly as unfit. A similar acknowledge-then-counter move is made in the article, in “Using Private Email, Clinton Thwarted Records Requests.” Here the author acknowledges what Clinton aides have said about her use of a private email (that it is not out of the ordinary), but counters what those aides said in order to acknowledge the FOIA law. Technically by acknowledging another voice (the aides and the law) the author entertains a dialogic alternative, but the author ultimately uses the counter to highlight the illegality of Clinton’s behavior. Similar to the previous example, this article was written within a few days of the *NYT* report regarding Clinton’s private email use. In “Using Private Email, Clinton Thwarted Records Requests,” the authors writes:

Mrs. Clinton's aides have said her use of private email was not out of the ordinary, pointing to the fact that former Secretary of State Colin Powell also used a personal email account, before the current regulations went into effect. But since 2009, said Laura Diachenko, a National Archives and Records spokeswoman, federal regulations have stated that “agencies that allow employees to send and receive official electronic mail messages using a system not operated by the agency must ensure that federal records sent

or received on such systems are preserved in the appropriate agency record-keeping system.'

First the author acknowledges that according to Clinton aides (“Mrs. Clinton’s aides have said”), her “private email use was not out of the ordinary,” and endorses the aides assertion (“pointing to the fact that”) that Colin Powell also used a personal email account. On its own, this statement seems to frame Clinton’s actions as being excusable, or at least something we view as ordinary. However, the author then counters that evaluation with “But since 2009...” The “But” colors the rest of the reader’s interpretation. The deontic modal that follows what agencies “must” ensure indicates that something implicit is being evaluated. That is, ensuring that records be persevered in the appropriate system (appraisal of value) is the rule, and the implication is that if you do not do this, then you are behaving in an improper manner.

Interestingly, the author never comes right out and says that Clinton was wrong or that we should think she broke any laws. By attributing the critique to another voice, the *NYT* keeps a little distance between themselves and any negative evaluation of Clinton. That said, the *NYT* still drew attention to those voices through countering moves, and ultimately implied negative judgments of propriety and normality against Clinton. There is also a double acknowledgment, and both sources seem authoritative. Not only does the author acknowledge what National Archives and Records spokeswoman, Laura Diachenko said, the author also acknowledges what federal regulations state, through the reported speech of Diachenko. Note first the title of those whose voices are being acknowledged: A National Archive and Records Expert spokeswoman, and, perhaps even more commanding, federal regulations. The first seems qualified to speak about record keeping systems since she works for the National Archives and Records administration, a government agency dedicated to managing and reserving historical records.

The second source, “federal regulations,” holds perhaps even more clout because it is associated with terms of government rule and legality. Oddo (2014) describes this kind of authoritative citing as “Transitive Chains of Authority.” The transitive chains function as “discursive sequences by which rhetors attach their credibility to other ‘voices’ in their texts, and implicitly endorse the attitudes expressed by those voices” (19). That the *NYT* references these authoritative voices after having countered the belief that Clinton’s practices were not out of the ordinary suggests the author endorses these authoritative voices and their beliefs. Ultimately, the voices acknowledged after the counter, “But,” imply negative propriety against Clinton because, according to federal regulations, she did not follow the rules by preserving the emails in the “appropriate record keeping system.” Still, as with the previous example, though the author may have endorsed the claim, they do not go so far as making an explicit, unsourced judgment.

Affect Combined with Implied Judgment

A negative portrayal of Clinton is further built through negative affects of insecurity and dissatisfaction, frequently coupled with negative implied judgments against Clinton’s behavior. For example, in the following excerpt, the *NYT* reports on Republican and some Democratic reactions to Clinton’s email use. The author writes:

Many senior Democrats appear anxious and said they hoped Mrs. Clinton would offer some clarity about why she had used her own email account to conduct government business.

Note first the attributed affect of “Many senior Democrats” who “hoped” Clinton “would” provide clarity: this future-focused modal assertion implies she has not yet clearly explained her email server use. When coupled with their apparent feelings of insecurity (“Many senior Democrats appear anxious”), it is implied that the author does not think Clinton has done a good

job handling and justifying her private email conduct. Again, however, the journalist allows sources to offer the negative judgments, rather than issues those judgments herself. Had the article explicitly stated it is impossible for Clinton to clarify, it might have suggested what she did is unjustifiable. Instead, the author brings in other voices to express anxiety about Clinton's behavior and a hopeful prescription for how they would like her to behave in the future.

Interestingly, these affects are not always attributed to a specific actor or agent. At times they are presented in non-transactive clauses—that is, affects not attributed to a specific actor, creating the illusion that everyone is feeling concerned about Clinton's capacity. For example, this can be seen in a story written one day after Clinton spoke to reporters for approximately twenty minutes at a conference at the U.N. Headquarters. At the conference she offered her first justification for the server, stating it was used for convenience. Here the writer stated:

Her [Clinton's] confirmation that she and her aides had chosen which emails to make available to the State Department raised new concerns about Mrs. Clinton's power to decide which records of her tenure as secretary would be available to congressional investigators, to journalists filing Freedom of Information Act requests, and to history.

The writer indicates an imagined consequence of the situation: that Clinton (and her aide's) decision to select some, but not all, emails to make available indicates she cannot be relied on to make appropriate decisions. That her previous decision raised new concerns—an affect of insecurity—about her power to decide which records "would" be available—suggests an implied judgment of capacity. In particular, this language perhaps indicates how the reader might feel about Clinton—that she may or may not be able to make competent decisions about the availability of records. Again, these affects are often connected to modal assertions. Here the author does not say what records are available, instead they entertain what records *would be*

available. While the conditional modal “would” entertains an alternative, that the availability of future records is connected to feelings of insecurity also leaves room for questions to be asked, such as, *Would the records ever be available? How did Clinton decide which records would be made available?* Again, these concerns are raised, but by an explicit actor, leading the reader to perhaps think everyone is feeling concerned about Clinton’s behavior.

This next example seems to combine the affective negativity, positive judgment of propriety, and negative implied judgment of tenacity. The author begins by describing Clinton’s decision to use a private email server to conduct government business. They write:

That decision has now invited the kind of relentless public scrutiny it was designed to avoid, while also maximizing Mrs. Clinton's control over sensitive email correspondence that she might not want to get out.

In addition, though Mrs. Clinton plans to run a 2016 presidential campaign focused on the future, the email furor has evoked bitter controversies from her past, in particular the notion that she is overly secretive in her dealings.

Mrs. Clinton didn't appear to violate any laws in choosing to use private email, but she did run afoul of long-standing guidelines over the use of private email and likely prevented official records from being entered into the public record in a timely fashion.

First it is worthy to note how agency is deployed. Clinton’s decision has invited scrutiny—she is the agent doing the inviting; meanwhile, the people who are actually doing the scrutinizing are represented only vaguely through the modified “public” in “public scrutiny.” Further, that her decision was designed to avoid this relentless public scrutiny implies something about Clinton’s

desire to be less than accountable with the public. In other words, that she is not only responsible for being under scrutiny, but that she also did not want to be under scrutiny in the first place. Here too, in the second paragraph, the “notion” that Clinton is overly secretive also remains unsourced. This, in addition to the way the authors describes Clinton as making a decision “designed to avoid” public scrutiny helps to strengthen this notion that she is overtly secretive. That is, the author’s own language seems to support this unsourced negative judgment of Clinton being overly secretive. Further, “Relentless public scrutiny,” “furor,” and “bitter” all imply negative affects of dissatisfaction, and are all targeted toward Clinton’s behavior—both past and present. That these affects are not tied to how a specific actor feels (but are rather tied to Clinton’s email and controversy from her past) may make the feeling seem more universal or assumed—felt by all. That the “furor” and “bitter” controversies are tied to notions of being “overtly secretive” not only tell us that some view her as secretive, but also imply how we should feel about her secrecy: angry and bitter. Furthermore, in the third paragraph, the author again uses a rhetorical syllogism—the enthymeme—to imply Clinton is not proprietary. The premises follow as such:

- 1) Those who “run afoul of long-standing guidelines” are not proprietary
- 2) Clinton ran afoul of long-standing guidelines
- 3) Clinton is not proprietary

By this point in the narrative, journalists manage to show deference toward Clinton on the surface through positive explicit judgment—even leaving room for the reader to decide what to think; but at the same time they subtly prescribe how Clinton ought to be—but is currently not—behaving. In a way, this analysis reveals the more subtle, seemingly unnoticeable ways Clinton’s authority is called into question.

Conclusion

In their book, *Memories of Lincoln and the Splintering of American Political Thought*, rhetorical scholars Shawn Parry Giles and David Kaufer note a debate around the “appropriate boundaries” of representing the lives and character of public figures, specifically in how their biographies are written. Their analysis highlights two distinct ideals of citizenship—Republican and Democratic—represented in the way life narratives are constructed. Parry Giles and Kaufer (2017) write, “A republican vision called for proper public ‘decorum’ and ‘reserve’ at all times to stifle rude behavior, [meaning].... ‘gentleman’ were expected to maintain a polite distance from others, to keep ‘private’ matters ‘private,’ to show respect at all times for the privacy of others, to show ‘deference’ to those in positions of power [emphasis added]” (47). On the other hand, “democratic sensibilities” disagreed with signs of deference because deference was believed to support the very elitism they opposed (47). These notions of citizenship ideals will return throughout the second and third chapters, but for now I will note in the beginning of this narrative we see what appears to be closer to a Republican ideal for citizenship wherein deference is shown toward Clinton by way of explicit and implicit judgments. That is, a subtle type of deference is shown in that it suggests hope is not yet lost; while expressions of dissatisfaction and insecurity are made about how Clinton behaved, negative judgments are implicit and journalists still regard Clinton’s character as intact. In this regard, the first phase of this narrative sets up a space for how they want Clinton to act. Thus, the findings of this chapter have several implications for how journalists show deference toward Clinton by relying on traditional beliefs of how public figures ought to be treated in the press. Ultimately, as the later chapters will reveal, uncovering how and what judgments are established—particularly in how it

grounds rhetorical practice and implies certain notions of preferable public behavior, can help us see how journalists reflect or perhaps shape how we view certain public figures.

CHAPTER 3: PUBLIC UNFITNESS

Six months following the initial revelation of Clinton's private email server, public focus stayed of her email use as new information came to light through investigations and public testimony. Specifically, several events took place that kept Clinton the subject of news cycles, including:

1. The FBI opening its investigation into her private email use
2. The FBI sorting messages recovered from her server
3. Clinton's official apology for her private email use, and
4. The Benghazi hearing

This chapter draws on Carvalho's theory of critical discourse moments as a way to understand the significance of moments in a news narrative. According to Carvalho (2008), one of the gaps left to fill in critical discourse analysis (CDA) is research that explores moments in the "life" of a news text, while also taking into account "institutional and sociocultural contexts" surrounding the media discourse produced on a particular topic (16). She defines these "critical discourse moments" as "periods that involve specific happenings, which may challenge the 'established' discursive positions" surrounding politically and socially relevant events (166). In this chapter I focus on the appraisals of Clinton that occurred during four critical discourse moments. Unlike the previous chapter, which covered discourse surrounding one primary event (the announcement that Clinton used a private email server), this chapter covers the expanded reports as new information was brought to light. Given this chapter covers multiple revelatory moments it is also necessary to take an intertextual approach and consider the coverage a few days prior and post each event.

In this chapter I also resume using Martin and White's appraisal framework to analyze how Clinton was appraised as discourse continued to circulate following the FBI's involvement

in the investigation, led by former FBI Director, James Comey.⁴ I analyze 35 news articles (22 from the *NYT* and 13 from the *WSJ*) whose primary topical focus is Clinton's private email server. Building from findings of the previous chapter, one of the goals of this analysis is to better understand how public discourse circulates, the consequences of that circulation, and, more specifically, the shifts in attitudes that made Clinton's behavior an object of sanction. I first preview my overall analysis in the context of my methodology, then argue for how Clinton was appraised by both outlets. Specifically, I share how the outlets became more dialogic and attitudinal as the controversy became more public. My findings revealed Clinton is characterized in the following way: In their initial reports from March 3rd to July 10th journalists directly state she did nothing illegal, but was not competently handling the email issue. However, in their later reports from July 10th to October 22nd, journalists suggest, indirectly, she did something wrong, expanding the dialogic space to consider more negative judgments. Ultimately, I argue these appraisals can reveal how claims of fitness, veracity, and propriety are often tied to presumptions about how women ought to behave in the public sphere.

Figure 1 shows the number of *explicitly inscribed* judgments made about Clinton, highlighting in blue the most frequent judgments in this second phase.⁵

⁴ James Comey served as the 7th Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) from 2013 until his dismissal in May 2017 at the hand of President Donald Trump.

⁵ The three blue columns represent high frequency judgments of 15 or more.

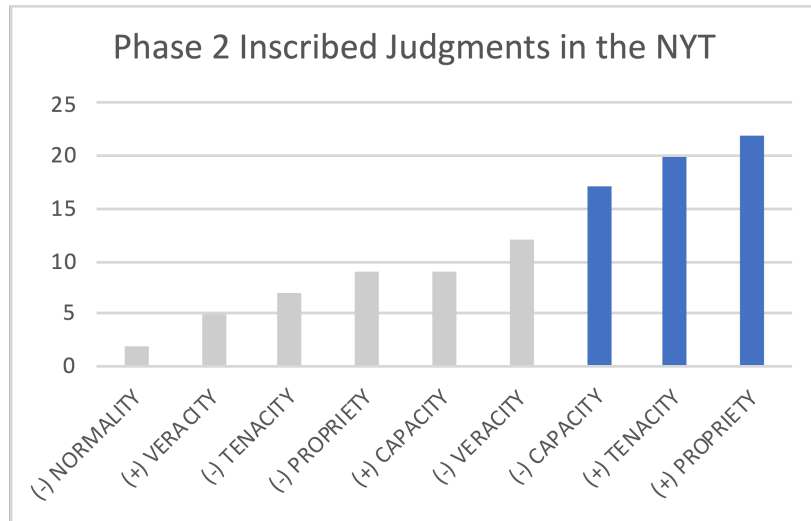


Figure 1: The NYT attributed both positive and negative attitudinal judgments about Clinton.

Figure 2 similarly shows the number of *explicitly inscribed* judgments made about Clinton in the *WSJ*, highlighting the judgments made most frequently.

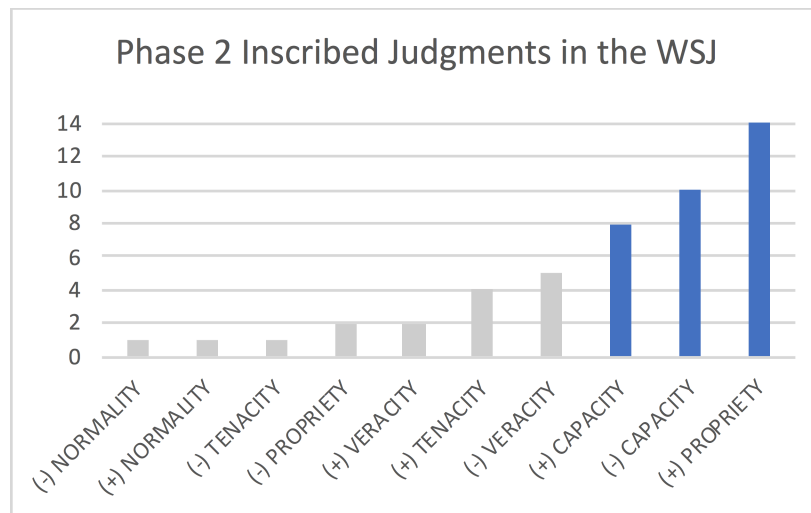


Figure 2: The WSJ attributed both positive and negative attitudinal judgments about Clinton.

My analysis also shows the frequency of *implicitly invoked* judgments against Clinton, with negative tokens of impropriety appearing most prominently. Figures 3 and 4 show the

number of *invoked judgments* made against Clinton, highlighting the most recurrent judgments⁶ in blue.

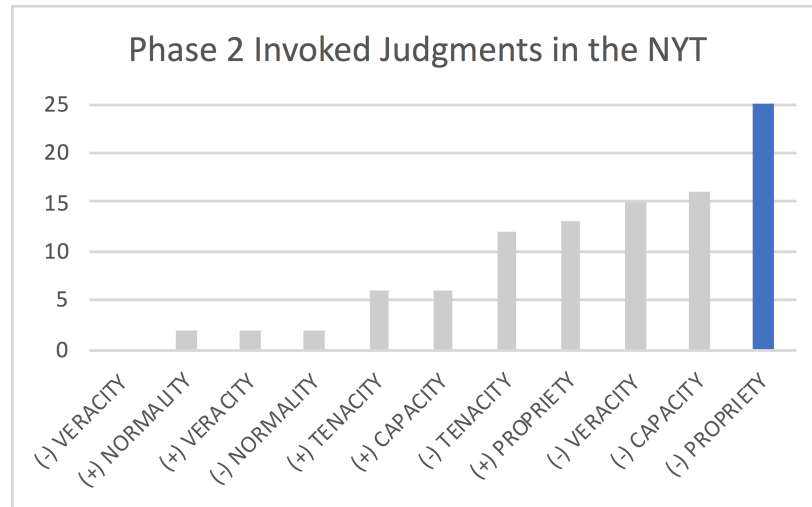


Figure 3: The NYT attributed high amounts of negative judgments against Clinton

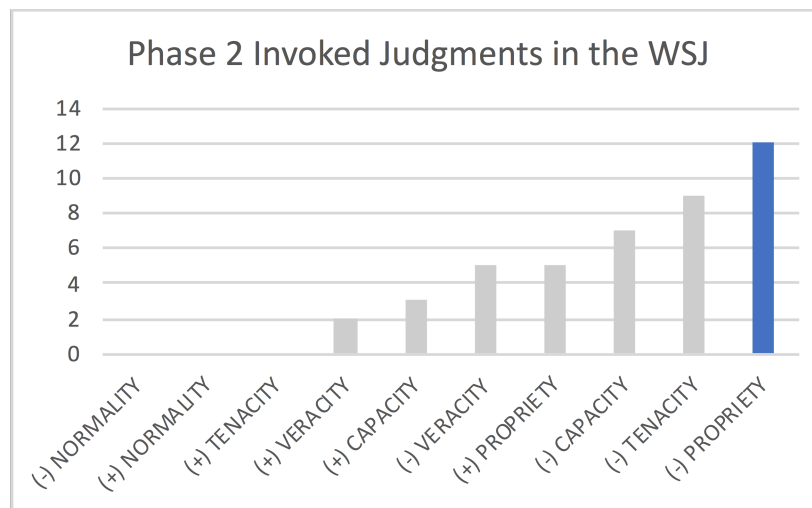


Figure 4: The NYT attributed high amounts of negative judgments against Clinton

As an earlier stage in the data collection process, these figures help guide my focus for the rest of the chapter.

⁶ For both Figure 3 and 4, the blue column shows where I will focus my analysis, demonstrating negative judgments of impropriety are made most frequently against Clinton.

Analysis

The most stark shift from Phase 1 to Phase 2 is in how Clinton is judged. As compared to the previous phase, this analysis will reveal increased dialogism and a drastic turn against Clinton. While judgments are not made directly against Clinton's propriety (that is, they do not make direct claims such as, "Clinton is a criminal"), negative judgments of propriety are consistently implicitly invoked against her. Notably, my analysis also shows consistent explicitly inscribed judgments against Clinton's capacity, suggesting she was not fit for the position as Secretary of State (and perhaps the President of the United States).

Granularly, there are three patterns of appraisal: 1) Explicit positive judgments of propriety and negative judgments of capacity, 2) affects of insecurity paired with appreciating lack of clarity about the process of locating emails and the classification of those emails, and 3) implicit negative judgments of propriety. Compared to the first narrative phase in Chapter 2, the deference previously shown is now largely weakened and/or lost entirely in some cases. To account for the added complexity of these critical discourse moments, I will follow the chronology of major events during the second phase, analyzing appraisals of Clinton in each event when: 1) The FBI opens its investigation, 2) The FBI sorts messages recovered from Clinton's server, 3) Clinton formally apologizes, and 4) The Benghazi Committee hearing occurs.

(1) FBI Open's Investigation

Approximately four months after the *NYT* first reported Clinton's private email use, on July 10th, 2015 the FBI opened an official investigation into Clinton's handling of classified

information in her emails during her tenure as Secretary of State.⁷ The U.S. Department of Justice's report, published on July 23rd states:

On July 10, 2015, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) initiated a full investigation based upon a referral received from the US Intelligence Community Inspector General (ICIG), submitted in accordance with Section 811(c) of the Intelligence Authorization Act of 1995 and dated July 6, 2015, regarding the potential unauthorized transmission and storage of classified information on the personal e-mail server of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (Clinton). The FBI's investigation focused on determining whether classified information was transmitted or stored on unclassified systems in violation of federal criminal statutes and whether classified information was compromised by unauthorized individuals, to include foreign governments or intelligence services, via cyber intrusion or other means (<https://vault.fbi.gov/hillary-r-clinton/Hillary%20R.%20Clinton%20Part%2001%20of%2028>).

Here the U.S. Department of Justice states the purpose of the FBI's investigation regarding "the potential unauthorized transmission and storage of classified information" on Clinton's private email server. Recall the news coverage of Clinton's server in the previous phases was relatively objective in reporting her behavior. That is, there were limited attitudinal judgments made about Clinton's behavior. However, a shift occurs with the opening of the FBI's investigation as additional attention was drawn to determining, as the report says, whether classified information was transmitted or stored improperly, and whether classified information was compromised. As I will later demonstrate, as the FBI investigation gains traction, sources will increasingly entertain the possibility Clinton violated federal criminal statutes.

⁷ In the passage below I underline significant sentences to which my analysis will turn.

In response to this July 23rd report, both the *NYT* and *WSJ* reported that the FBI was opening a criminal investigation of Clinton. Specifically, the *NYT* ran a front-page story on July 24th, 2015 with the headline “Criminal Inquiry Sought In Clinton’s Use of Email,” and the lead:

“Two inspectors general have asked the Justice Department to open a criminal investigation into whether sensitive government information was mishandled in connection with the personal email account Hillary Rodham Clinton used as secretary of state, senior government officials said Thursday.”

Note first that the phrase “criminal investigation” being entertained following the conditional phrase, “whether sensitive information was mishandled.” While a criminal investigation does not necessarily establish guilt, the statement implies the two Inspectors General think it is possible Clinton behaved criminally in connection to her use of a personal email account. That is, criminal investigations are conducted because there is a possibility a crime was committed (an entertained implied negative judgment of impropriety). In addition, the judgement is attributed to “senior government officials”—at title indicating an authoritative position, and one readers should respect. In a similar manner, the *WSJ* released a story the same day with the headline, “Clinton Email Probe Sought --- Inspectors general call for criminal investigation of alleged mishandling of classified information.” Like the *NYT*, the *WSJ* is careful not to say Clinton mishandled classified information (a crime)—rather they say the mishandling is “alleged,” again entertaining the possibility of a crime (a judgment of impropriety). The *WSJ* lead continues:

“An internal government review of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's email archive has revealed that hundreds of those messages contain potentially classified information.

A joint memorandum from the inspectors general of the Department of State and the intelligence community viewed by The Wall Street Journal found that an investigation discovered "hundreds of potentially classified emails within the collection" of Mrs. Clinton's emails.

In a minimum of one case, the review found that at least one of Mrs. Clinton's emails already publicly released on the State Department's website contained classified information.

As a result, the inspectors general have asked the Department of Justice to open a criminal investigation into the mishandling of classified information, according to a person familiar with the matter”

Of importance is the discovery of “hundreds of potentially classified emails” that led to the request of a “criminal investigation.” Again, labelling the investigation criminal indicates possible impropriety on Clinton’s part, according to the somewhat vague “person familiar with the matter.”⁸

Notably later that same day, July 24th 2015, the Inspectors General of the Intelligence Community, Charles McCullough III and Steve Linick released a statement “Regarding the Review of Former Secretary Clinton’s Emails” — specifically they found four emails containing classified information, and they clarified that their referral to intelligence oversight committees *was not a criminal referral, but rather a security referral*. They state:

IC IG [Inspector General of the Intelligence Community] made a referral detailing the potential compromise of classified information to security officials within the Executive

Branch. The main purpose of the referral was to notify security officials that classified information may exist on at least one private server and thumb drive that are not in the government's possession. An important distinction is that the IC IG did not make a criminal referral— it was a security referral made for counterintelligence purposes. The IC IG is statutorily required to refer potential compromised of national security information to the appropriate IC security officials.⁹

Here the Inspectors General of the Intelligence Community mark “an important distinction” that they “did not make a criminal referral”—rather, “it was a security referral made for counterintelligence purposes.” While it is not possible to determine whether this memo was written directly in response to the *NYT* and *WSJ* reports, it is worthy to note the effort they make to mark the important (a positive appreciation of value) distinction of their referral. However, interestingly, it does not appear the IC IG memo clarification was meant to defend Clinton's actions; in fact, the statement comes down rather sternly on the transmission of classified information. The McCullough II and Linkick report:

This classified information should never have been transmitted via an unclassified personal system.

The Inspectors General state that “classified information should never have been transmitted via an unclassified system.” Here “should represents an important instance of modality. According to Halliday (2004), “modality refers to the area of meaning that lies between yes and no— the intermediate ground between positive and negative polarity” (618); Oddo (2014) adds that

⁸ <https://www.mediamatters.org/blog/2015/07/25/ny-times-issues-second-major-correction-to-botc/204596>

⁹ https://www.stateoig.gov/system/files/statement_of_the_icig_and_oig_regarding_review_of_clintons_emails_july_24_2015_0.pdf

modality includes “the resources by which rhetors qualify the certainty or social desirability of their propositions” (82). Modality is then typically distinguished as being either 1) epistemic (what Halliday calls “indicative”), meaning it qualifies the certainty of a given utterance, or 2) deontic (what Halliday calls “imperative”), meaning it concerns social obligation (Halliday 618). Given the focus on social obligation, modulations of obligation like “should,” “supposed to,” or “must,” can “be related to lexicalised judgments of propriety,” as well as indicated through degrees of modulation (Martin and White 55). Thus, the statement that classified information “never should have been transmitted” implies that someone—whoever was responsible for transmitting the information—acted beyond reproach. The deontic modal “should” indicates that something ought to have been done, while “never” indicates an intense negation of this obligation, an extreme failure to do what one should. One might consider the difference between saying:

1. This classified information was transmitted
2. This classified information should never have been transmitted
3. “Transmitting this classified information is corrupt”

Each statement progressively moves closer to an explicit negative judgment. The first is a monoglossic statement without judgment (presuming reader’s do not know transmitting classified information is wrong), the second is a more dialogically open statement implying judgment through modality, while the third is a direct judgment of impropriety. The second sentence (2) is what McCullough and Linik report. This modal of obligation—“should never have”—is somewhat akin to scolding; and because Clinton’s server is the subject of the statement (and she is the only human agent named in the passage), it is reasonable to assume she is the one being scolded. Further, while it is not unheard of for the Inspector’s General to comment on these matters, it is rather difficult to argue against such an authoritative voice—if

the agency in charge of national security says you should not do something, that indicates you really should not do it.

At this point it is useful to return to the press' response to this IC IG statement. Within 48 hours following the Inspectors General letter release, the *NYT* and *WSJ* corrected their story headline and leads.¹⁰ The original leads for both the *NYT* and *WSJ* contained the premodifier "criminal," which they later removed. For example, the revised lead for the *NYT* appears as such:

Two inspectors general have asked the Justice Department to open an investigation ["criminal" premodifier removed] into whether sensitive government information was mishandled in connection with the personal email account Hillary Rodham Clinton used as secretary of state, senior government officials said Thursday.

Again, the premodifier "criminal" is removed. However, also note the word "mishandled" to describe the actions someone may have taken "in connection with the personal email account of Hillary Rodham Clinton." The report from the Inspectors General never uses the word "mishandled," but rather refer to information that was "transmitted." That journalists chose the word "mishandled" (as opposed to "transmitted" "sent") not only suggests innovation on their part, but may also be another subtle attitudinal maneuver to entertain Clinton's incapacity as a government official. In addition to the removal of "criminal," the placement of these corrections in the reports online is also significant. Figure 5 shows what readers see when they access the article online today. While the *NYT* notes that a correction was made at the top ("Update, Aug. 20, 2018"), readers need to scroll all the way down to the bottom of the page in order to view the

¹⁰ <https://www.mediamatters.org/research/2015/07/24/ny-times-walks-back-flimsy-report-on-probe-into/204576>

actual correction. The Update states that “subsequent developments and later reporting by the *NYT* shed additional light on these events” regarding Comey’s handling of the investigation, but does not initially acknowledge their incorrect reference to the referral as “criminal” as opposed to “security.”

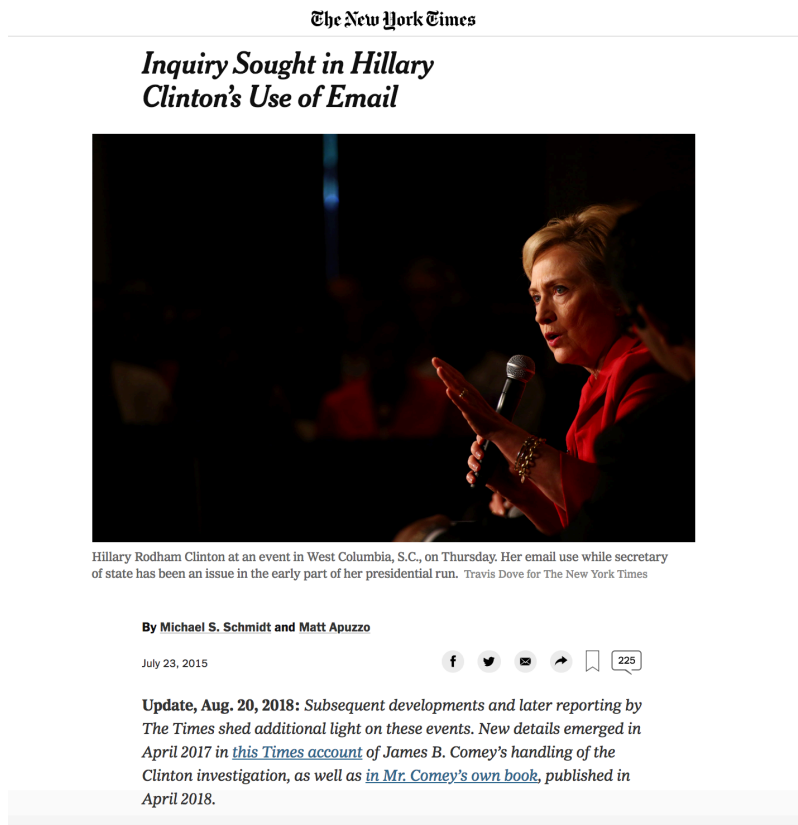


Figure 5: Current NYT article appearance online

Figure 6 then shows what readers see if they scroll down to the bottom of the page.

State Department officials also said that Mr. Kerry is concerned about the toll the criticism has had on the department and has urged his deputies to comply with the requests quickly.

Correction: July 25, 2015

An article and a headline in some editions on Friday about a request to the Justice Department for an investigation regarding Hillary Clinton's personal email account while she was secretary of state misstated the nature of the request, using information from senior government officials. It addressed the potential compromise of classified information in connection with that email account. It did not specifically request an investigation into Mrs. Clinton.

Correction: July 26, 2015

An article in some editions on Friday about a request to the Justice Department for an investigation regarding Hillary Clinton's personal email account while she was secretary of state referred incorrectly, using information from senior government officials, to the request. It was a "security referral," pertaining to possible mishandling of classified information, officials said, not a "criminal referral."

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A version of this article appears in print on July 24, 2015, on Page A1 of the New York edition with the headline: Inquiry Sought in Clinton's Use of Email. Order Reprints | Today's Paper | Subscribe

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Figure 6: Current NYT corrections appearing at bottom of online webpage

The first correction on July 25th, 2015 notes that the original story “misstated the nature of the request,” but omits the actual nature of the request, stating the Justice Department “did not specifically request an investigation into Mrs. Clinton.” The second correction on July 26th, 2015, notes that some editions of the article “referred incorrectly, using information from senior government officials, to the request.” The mistake is attributed to “senior government officials,” not the authors. My point here is not to say the *NYT*'s handling of corrections is inherently suspicious, but rather that it is possible the placement and omission of certain information could have impacted how the public judged Clinton's behavior. Once an individual is associated with a

criminal investigation it is arguably difficult to rescind that appraisal—particularly if the correction is not made salient.

Following the correction made by the *NYT* and the *WSJ*, on July 25th each outlet focused intensely on whether Clinton or the State Department intentionally mishandled classified information, and whether the information was actually classified when she sent it. Reports from both the *NYT* and *WSJ* focus heavily on classified information being sent—that is, the problem gets further specified from just having using a private email server, to having handled emails containing classified information on the server.

The coverage also begins to build implicit negative judgments against Clinton based on beliefs about how public figures (at times women) ought to behave. The example below demonstrates how an implied judgment is carefully built through engaging with other dialogic resources. In other words, how an implicit judgment is made by entertaining alternatives. In the article, “Clinton Emails Said to Contain Classified Data, the author writes:

Government investigators said Friday that they had discovered classified information on the private email account that Hillary Rodham Clinton used while secretary of state, stating unequivocally that those secrets never should have been stored outside of secure government computer systems.

The first sentence establishes an implied judgment, though it is not initially clear to whom the judgment is made. An enthymatic analysis reveals the first invoked judgment against Clinton.

The enthymeme is built as follows:

1. Government investigators said Friday that they had discovered classified information on the private email account that Hillary Rodham Clinton used while secretary of state, stating unequivocally that those secrets never should have been stored outside of secure government computer systems.
2. People who store secrets on non-secure computer systems are unreliable

3. Whoever stored those secrets on Clinton's server is unreliable. This token of negative capacity is attributed to Government investigators (an authoritative source), who not only state what secrets "should never have been" stored, but "unequivocally" state what should not have been done, intensifying the force of the implied judgment.

Next the author acknowledges both Clinton's and her campaign's voice, then counters their positive appraisal. They state:

Mrs. Clinton has said for months that she kept no classified information on the private server that she set up in her house so she would not have to carry both a personal phone and a work phone. Her campaign said Friday that any government secrets found on the server had been classified after the fact.

According to Clinton and her campaign, Clinton did not keep classified information on the server, and any secret that was found on the server was not classified at the time it was put on the server. Thus, Clinton implies she did not do anything wrong (a positive judgment of propriety). In a quick turn however, beginning with the counter "But" the claim of Clinton's campaign is immediately contradicted in what might appear as a "he said/ she said" situation, pitting Clinton's veracity against the Inspectors General. They state:

But the inspectors general of the State Department and the nation's intelligence agencies said the information they found was classified when it was sent and remains so now.

Information is considered classified if its disclosure would likely harm national security, and such information can be sent or stored only on computer networks with special safeguards.

"This classified information never should have been transmitted via an unclassified personal system." Steve A. Linick, the State Department inspector general, said in a statement signed by him and I. Charles McCullough III, the inspector general for the intelligence community.

The findings by the two inspectors general raise new questions about Mrs. Clinton's use of her personal email at the State Department, a practice that since March has been criticized by her Republican adversaries as well as advocates of open government, and has made some Democrats uneasy.

Again, "But" works to counter the claim of Clinton's campaign. Furthermore, given the Inspectors General claim that Clinton's server contained classified information—information that "would likely harm national security" if disclosed, the article entertains that Clinton may have compromised national security. Finally, her actions are described as raising "new questions," and Clinton is said to have been "criticized by her Republican adversaries as well as advocates of open government," and making some Democrats feel "uneasy." Typically when questions are raised about what someone has done they at least signify there is something unknown that is potentially wrong, and at most imply the individual's behavior should not be approved of. In this case it appears to be the latter. That Clinton's use of a personal email is later described as having been "criticized by her Republican adversaries" as well as making some Democrats "uneasy" (a negative affect of insecurity) strengthens the previous implied judgment of impropriety. In sum, the article counters Clinton's explanation of her actions with an authoritative rebuttal ("But the inspectors general...said"), acknowledges a strong rationale against those actions ("would likely harm national security") implies the possibility of wrongdoing and the need for further

investigation (“the findings...raise new questions”), and imputes negative feelings about Clinton’s actions to her Democratic allies (“uneasy”)—and all this works to further establish a negative judgment against Clinton—in particular that she may have lied and acted irresponsibly. This example, like many found in the *NYT* (and as I will show further in the *WSJ*), confirm what many feminist rhetoricians have been after for decades—exposing how women are often targeted based on questions of competency (Jamieson 1995; Parry-Giles & Parry-Giles 1996; Parry-Giles 2014; Glenn 2018).

Near appraisals are also made in the *WSJ*——specifically that Clinton did not do what she was supposed to do. For example, in the July 25th 2015 article, “Clinton Emailed Classified Material, Probe Says,” highlights a lack of clarity and implied propriety about Clinton’s actions. The author writes:

The investigation concluded that Mrs. Clinton should have used a secure network to transmit the emails in question. The information in four of Mrs. Clinton's emails "should never have been transmitted via an unclassified personal system," the inspectors general determined.

It isn't clear whether Mrs. Clinton was aware she was sending classified information.
"None of the emails we reviewed had classification or dissemination markings," wrote Inspector General I. Charles McCullough in the letter to Congress.

The joint statement from the inspectors general indicated the referral to the FBI was routine. It said the intelligence community inspector general is required by law "to refer potential compromises of national security information" to appropriate security officials.

In the first sentence the author not only paraphrases what the investigation concluded, but also directly quotes Inspector General Charles McCullough. Here Clinton is the subject responsible for the unfulfilled obligation. Not only did she not use the proper server (“Mrs. Clinton should have used a secure network), but she is also implicated in something that never should have happened (“should never have been transmitted”). Thus, the first two sentences imply a judgment of impropriety against Clinton. The second paragraph break introduces the lack of clarity surrounding whether Clinton knowingly committed a crime, while entertaining the possibility Clinton did not know she was committing a crime, given “none of the emails we [McCullough and Linick] reviewed had classification or dissemination markers.”

Yet, even though the Inspectors General say “it isn’t clear” if she was aware she did something wrong, the first attributed voice in the previous paragraph (“the inspectors determined”) states Clinton *did do* something she should not have (using a personal account to transmit the emails in question), thus strengthening a negative judgment against her. Furthermore, despite the referral’s appraisal as “routine” in the final paragraph, the author’s still entertain that Clinton compromised national security. Entertaining that someone (I.e. Clinton) compromised national security and being required by law to refer potential compromises puts this in the realm of propriety and capacity. In the best case, if Clinton *was not aware* unaware she sent classified information, it suggests she was ignorant or incompetent (negative judgments of capacity). At worst, if she *was* aware she sent classified information, that signifies she acted illegally (a negative judgment of propriety). Either way, Clinton she is appraised negatively, and her behavior gets sanctioned.

(2) FBI Sorts Recovered Emails

After the July 2015 reports on whether Clinton transmitted classified information, less than a month later, the Department of Justice held a hearing to address Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuits seeking access to Clinton's email during her time as Secretary of State. In that hearing, on August 20th, 2015, U.S. District Judge Emmet T. Sullivan, presiding over the lawsuit, stated "We wouldn't be here if today if the employee [Clinton] had followed government policy." Outlets then picked up Sullivan's statement and on August 21st 2015 the *NYT* wrote an article entitled, "Clinton Didn't Follow Rules Judge Says." This passage reveals further judgments of impropriety and continues to acknowledge she did not follow the rules, all while carefully sourcing these judgments to other voices. The *NYT* writes:

A federal judge on Thursday said that Hillary Rodham Clinton did not comply with government policies in her exclusive use of a personal email account while she was secretary of state, challenging her longstanding position that she abided by the rules.

At a hearing for a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit against the State Department, the judge, Emmet G. Sullivan of Federal District Court for the District of Columbia, said that "we wouldn't be here today if the employee had followed government policy."

Judge Sullivan also opened the door for the F.B.I., which is investigating whether there was classified information on Mrs. Clinton's account, to expand its inquiry to pursue emails that she may have deleted.

In the first sentence, the clause "Hillary Rodham Clinton did not comply with government policies" is an explicit judgment of impropriety. This negative judgment is contrasted with a

positive judgment (“she abided by the rules”), a positive attitude attributed to Clinton as “her longstanding position.” Taken together, however, the contrast attitudes leave readers with an implied assertion of Clinton’s negative veracity. The first negative judgment comes from the authoritative voice of a federal judge, and his assertion is said to be “challenging” Clinton’s “longstanding position that she abided by the rules.” In other words, not only did Clinton fail to comply with the rules, she also may have lied consistently about her compliance. The author then acknowledges Sullivan’s voice in a direct attributed quote, “we wouldn’t be here today if the employee had followed government policy.” The modal “wouldn’t” and the conditional “if” work to present the possibility that this situation was preventable. The assumption is that the “here” in “we wouldn’t be here today” is an undesirable situation, and it is Clinton’s fault. Up until this point in the corpus the public and press’ focus has been on just trying to understand what happened (I.e. what events took place). Now that the public are learning more about what happened through Congressional hearings and investigations, officials appear more comfortable postulating that this could (and should) have been prevented. In addition, because the authors entertain and occasionally put forth their own implications that Clinton has lied and broken rules—all of which was preventable—this could be read as scolding. Finally, the last sentence literally opens the dialogic space by writing that Judge Sullivan “opened the door for the FBI” and that the FBI will “expand its inquiry to pursue emails she may have deleted”—both figurative visualizations of dialogism. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) describe these devices as conduit and orientational metaphors, which “structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we related to other people” (4). In this instance they work to entertain doubt about Clinton’s behavior. Given the previous judgments of impropriety, readers could also intuit

this to mean the deleted emails (“that may have been deleted”) may reveal evidence she committed a crime. All this works to imply that she behaved inappropriately.

On August 21st the *WSJ* reported “FBI Probe of Clinton May Expand.” Note first the title which entertains the probe’s expansion in the phrase “May Expand.” The author writes:

The Clinton server, as well as three thumb memory drives that contain copies of some of her emails, are now in the possession of the FBI, which is investigating to determine how her system operated, who had access to it and whether that posed any security risks for government secrets.

If the FBI were to find additional messages that she didn't turn over to the State Department as part of its FOIA review, but which officials nevertheless deem to be discussions of government business, it could undercut Mrs. Clinton's claims that she deleted only personal messages before turning her records over to the government.

The first sentence entertains negative judgment of tenacity in the possibility that Clinton’s server posed security risks. If those who pose security risks are unreliable, and it is possible Clinton “posed...security risks”, then Clinton may be unreliable. The second sentence, beginning with the conditional “if” considers a situation wherein Clinton lied. “If” the FBI finds evidence that there were “additional message” Clinton did not turn over to the State Department, (presupposing there are already messages she did not turn over) “it could undercut Clinton’s claims that she deleted only personal messages before turning her records over to the government.” Of interest is the length the *WSJ* goes to play out a scenario where Clinton is dishonest and “undercut” by the truth. Here the implication is that she *did* delete government

emails in an attempt to hide something. This implied judgment of negative veracity can be better understood through the following enthymeme:

(1) The FBI may find messages Clinton did not turn over
 (2) People who do not turn over all records to the State Department have something to hide
 (3) Clinton may have been trying to hide something.

The conclusion that she may have something to hide is a negative token of veracity, and again contributes to larger norms about how she ought to behave. In addition, up until this point Clinton's justification for deleting emails has been that they were personal (that is, not important to government interests), but if (again, conditionally) that proves to be untrue, then Clinton is in some hot water. Later in the article the author also acknowledges the judge's evaluation of the investigation as "important" and writes that what may be found on the server is potentially "relevant to the continuing lawsuit over Clinton-related records." Ultimately the investigations are kept alive through their description as important and relevant (positive appreciations of value), and Clinton is still considered to be potentially unreliable and untrustworthy. These judgments continue to circulate throughout the narrative, taking us to the next critical moment in Clinton's narrative: her apology.

(3) Clinton's Apology - Muir Interview and Coverage

Approximately a week after the *NYT* ran the story announcing Clinton's private email use, at a press conference at the United Nations on March 10th, 2015, Clinton explained why she used a personal email account, stating, "When I got to work as Secretary of State, I opted for convenience to use my personal email account, which was allowed by the State Department because I thought it would be easier to carry just one device for my work and for my personal emails instead of two" (Merica 2015). Months later, amid the FBI's ongoing investigation and

congressional hearings, in the first week of September 2015 Clinton was interviewed by ABC News' David Muir and asked direct questions about the public's perception of her and her original explanation of her private server use. As my analysis will explain, despite Clinton's attempt to apologize for her behavior while defending her behavior as propitious, Muir focuses the interview around negative public perceptions of Clinton and her eventual apology. In particular, *Muir frames Clinton as an individual who is incapable of taking responsibility for her actions*. Muir starts:

DAVID MUIR: Here we sit, five months into your campaign and there are some eye-opening poll numbers out there, and I'm sure you're aware of them, when it comes to how Americans see you. Our ABC poll, Gallup, Quinnipiac showing your favorability numbers taking a sharp dive. In one poll, the lowest ever. And when voters were asked, "What is the first word that comes to mind when you think of Hillary Clinton?" Words like liar, dishonest, untrustworthy were at the top of the list. Does this tell you that your original explanation about the private server, that you did it to carry one phone out of convenience, that this didn't sit well with the American people?

Muir begins, like most interview with political candidates by contextualizing their polling position, raising the issue of Clinton's honesty and perception that she is dishonest. The qualifiers "liar, dishonest, [and] untrustworthy" already place her back on the defensive. Muir then poses a Yes/No question — "Does this tell you that your original explanation about the private server...didn't sit well with the American people?" — leaving Clinton to either respond, "Yes, this tells me my original explanation didn't sit well with the American people," or "No, this doesn't tell me my original explanation didn't sit well with the American people." In any case, this type of Yes/No questions positions the interviewee (Clinton) to make a disclosure.

Interestingly, Muir connects Clinton's "sharp dive" in the polls to her original explanation. While Clinton's poll numbers could have dropped for many reasons, including news conference of her emails, Muir's focus on her explanation implies Clinton's drop in the polls is related to her original explanation of the emails and her explanations' supposed inadequacy. Clinton then responds:

HILLARY CLINTON: Well, David, obviously, I don't like hearing that. I am confident by the end of this campaign people will know they can trust me. And that I will be on their side and will fight for them and their families. But I do think I could have and should have done a better job answering questions earlier.

Clinton makes two distinct points before addressing the topic of her explanation. First, she expresses her dislike for hearing negative perceptions about herself ("Well, David, obviously I don't like hearing that"), then concedes that the public can trust her — presupposing that they do not already trust her. Notably, viewers may pick up on Clinton's indirect response to Muir's Yes/No question with "Well." In stating, "But I do think," Clinton then seems to answer Muir's original question in terms of capacity and valuation of her "job," successfully redirecting the debate away from judgments of veracity. Further, by saying she "should have done a better job answering questions earlier," Clinton makes it seem like she was honest, but perhaps unclear, also possibly implying that since then she has done a better job. In other words, Clinton shifts the frame from dishonesty ("people can't trust me") to capacity ("people can rely on me to do a good job"). Clinton continues:

HILLARY CLINTON: I really didn't perhaps appreciate the need to do that. What I had done was allowed, it was above board. But in retrospect, certainly, as I look back at it

now, even though it was allowed, I should've used two accounts. One for personal, one for work-related emails.

That was a mistake. I'm sorry about that. I take responsibility. And I'm trying to be as transparent as I possibly can to not only release 55,000 pages of my emails, turn over my server. But I am looking forward, finally, to testifying before Congress. Something I've been asking for nearly a year.

Following her acknowledgment that she “could have and should have done better job answering questions earlier,” Clinton shifts the frame from her “original explanation about the private server” (what Muir asked about) to the legitimacy of her using the server. She seeks to 1) establish she did not do anything against the rules (a positive appraisal of propriety) and 2) establish that nevertheless she is sorry (explicit positive propriety and implicit negative tenacity or capacity) and accountable for her mistake (positive tenacity). First, Clinton’s classification of her behavior as “allowed” and “above board” signal she acted appropriately within the realm of social sanction. Second, she expresses sorrow (“I’m sorry about that”) indicating both positive propriety (because it is morally good to be sorry) and more implicitly, negative tenacity or propriety (because if you are sorry, you have made a mistake that shows irresponsibility and low capacity, or that you have committed a moral transgression). In other words, she drives past her original explanation in order to apologize for her original behaviors—“that [using one email account] was a mistake. I’m sorry about that. I take responsibility”—then maneuvers toward appearing transparent and willing to cooperate. It is also worth pausing on how Clinton frames her behavior as a mistake. The word “mistake” is often connoted with accidents—that is, something not intended to be harmful. Clinton’s choice to call her email use a “mistake” as

opposed to, say “an error in judgment” or even simply “wrong,” then possibly implies it was not something she did with ill-intent or ignorance. Again, given what Clinton did was both “allowed” and “above board”, as an audience we are led to believe her “mistake” (using two email accounts) was *not against the rules* (i.e. not in the realm of impropriety). Rather, the implication is that her mistake was in creating confusion for the American people; yet, there is no indication of what actually makes it a mistake. That Clinton says she made a mistake right after insisting what she did was “allowed” and “above board” may work to satisfy a need to apologize while not admitting fault. Further, not only is she looking forward to testifying before Congress, she is “finally” testifying before Congress, implying she has been ready to cooperate with Congress for some time. By the end of the first conversational turn, Clinton attempts to frame herself as someone who follows procedure (a positive judgment of propriety), takes responsibility (a positive judgment of capacity), and has nothing to hide (a positive judgment of veracity).

Interestingly, as the next turn will reveal, Muir accepts the honesty of her explanation, but circles back to double down on the issue of her apology. Specifically, Muir’s insistence on Clinton’s admittance of a “mistake” works as a form of ritualistic public punishment against Clinton. Muir begins focusing on the word “sorry,” twice directly asking if Clinton made a mistake (even though she just said she made a mistake). In doing so Muir works to frame Clinton as someone upon whom we (the “millions watching tonight”) cannot rely. The exchange proceeds as follows:

DAVID MUIR: You have said you would apologize for the confusion but not say, "I'm sorry." But I did hear a word in there just a moment ago and I'm curious. Would you acknowledge that you made a mistake here? Because you wrote in your own memoir last year just how important using the word mistake is in politics. You, you wrote, "In our

political culture, saying you made a mistake is often taken as weakness when in fact it can be a sign of strength and growth." And so as you sit here, millions watching tonight, did you make a mistake?

Here Muir first draws attention to previous claims Clinton has made with regard to apologies and mistakes (one from her memoir, *Hard Choices*, and the one she said moments ago). Quoting Clinton directly from her memoir, it appears Muir planned to ask Clinton about making a mistake, regardless of whether Clinton actually made the concession in the interview. One possible read is that Muir was looking for a more dramatic soundbite than the one she already gave. That is, he may have wanted footage that made it look like he pressured her into admitting a mistake, rather than one where she volunteered it on her own. Another interpretation, and one supported by analyzing the actual exchange, is that Muir believes he has reason not to accept one admission. That is, his need to revisit whether she made a mistake seems to imply Clinton cannot be believed the first time. His focus continues by bringing up Clinton's prior words about the value of admitting mistakes—specifically “how important the word mistake is in politics,” Muir presupposes the value of admitting mistakes *publicly*, and by quoting her directly puts her in a position where she must agree (presumably with herself) or else be seen as hypocritical. Also worth noting, white males can often admit mistakes and call it growth, while those who are non-male and non-white (I.e. A female person of color), are presumed to be inferior; admitting mistakes confirms their presumed inferior status, thus casting them as unfit. Who gets to admit mistake, in other words, is always clouded by assumptions of fitness.

Beyond quoting Clinton directly, Muir's presupposition (“as you sit here, millions watching tonight”) gives the impression that is a made-for-TV-moment. Rhetorically, Muir makes the notion of publicity salient by insisting Clinton repeatedly publicly apologize—and

framing the salience of the apology in front of “millions watching tonight”— what Adam Ellwanger (2012) argues serve as a form of punishment. As Ellwanger writes, public apologies operate as “ritualistic public punishment” rather than enabling forgiveness, in order to enforce “certain ethical standards for public speech” (307). For political candidates in particular this performance of public punishment not only enforces ethical standards for public speech, but also how journalists often use public apologies to circulate claims about a person’s character and general tendencies as a candidate. Rather than framing the issue as Clinton’s private server use and potential compromise of national security, journalists frame the problem as a need for Clinton to publicly, and repeatedly, apologize. Clinton then responds:

HILLARY CLINTON: I did. I did. As I said, it was allowed and there was no hiding it. It was totally above board. Everybody in the government I communicated with -- and that was a lot of people-- knew I was using a personal e-mail. But I'm sorry that it has, you know, raised all of these questions. I do take responsibility for having made what is clearly not the best decision. And I want people to know that I am trying to be as transparent as possible so that, you know, legitimate questions can and will be answered.

Also interesting is how Clinton responds to Muir’s question and frames her own behavior. A more charitable reading would be that she knows her email use was a bad decision because it put classified information at risk, yet she never mentions anything about classification. For Clinton, it appears she tries to ‘have it both ways,’ saying the private server was allowed, above board, and something many people knew about (all positive judgments of propriety and normality), yet she is sorry and recognizes it was a mistake. In fact, again, she *never mentions any reasons why it was a bad decision*, except perhaps that it had “raised all these questions.” In the end she takes responsibility for what was “clearly not the best decision,” but has not completely spelled out the

reasons why this is clear. In this sense, Clinton could be read unsympathetically: it is only clear to Clinton that it was a bad decision because she not having to deal with the blowback; that is, the “questions” in this PR scandal. Actually, she spends most her time saying why her private email use was a *good* decision. Meanwhile, she obliquely addresses Muir’s original question about her honesty with her less salient talk about “transparency.”

Coverage of Clinton’s Apology

Days after the Muir interview was broadcast on *ABC News*, coverage of Clinton’s apology circulated through newspapers, including front page coverage in the *NYT* in a piece titled, “Clinton Takes Tortured Path to Sorry.” At the time Clinton has been accused (explicitly and implicitly) for two major transgressions: 1) the actual misuse of a server allegedly damaging national security, and 2) her alleged evasive and self-serving explanation of her server use. To recall, in the apology she provided to Muir she acknowledges her misuse of the private server, while defending her actions as propertious and transparent. As my analysis of the following coverage will reveal, based on the apology Clinton provides, journalists focus not on whether the use of the server was wrong, but rather on her alleged evasive and self-serving explanation of her server use. That is, her ability to explain and take responsibility for her actions— again using Clintons’ apology as a form of public punishment to shame and humiliate, rather than as a form of forgiveness. As Ellwanger (2012) describes, “the activity of confession *itself* becomes the punitive mechanism,” and I contribute, the circulation of this activity in news reports works to establish frames for how the public ought to view Clinton’s character (310). In other words, the journalist uses the public apology as punishment to frame a negative characterological portrait of Clinton—one that would appear damaging to a political candidate. The *NYT* wrote:

Hillary Rodham Clinton did not want to apologize.

For months, when advisers or friends gently suggested she say she was sorry for using a private email address and server while at the State Department, Mrs. Clinton replied that her actions had been within the law and that political opponents and journalists were manufacturing the controversy. Apologizing, she argued, would only legitimize it.

On Tuesday, she relented. In an interview with ABC News, Mrs. Clinton said using a private email had been "a mistake," adding: "I'm sorry about that."

The author begins with a monogloss assertion, stating Clinton's alleged desire as a fact—"Hillary Rodham Clinton did not want to apology," followed by an immediate negative frame. Here the affirmative position that Clinton wanted to apologize is raised by the author and then immediately denied, suggesting Clinton did not want to take responsibility for her actions. The next phrase, "for months" works to establish a timeline wherein Clinton has repeatedly been told to do something, presupposing that those who need to be told "for months" are too stubborn to listen. Further, that her friends and advisers have "gently suggested she say she was sorry" in contrast with Clinton who "replied" and "argued" indicates Clinton is ornery and stubborn. Though Clinton's perspective is acknowledges, her apology, to which "she relented" is framed as a deeply uncomfortable and forced event. Interestingly, the *NYT* seems to accept this apology (perhaps humiliating enough for them to finally accept) even though, in the Muir interview, Clinton still insists that her actions were within the law and still seems to apologize as much for the "questions" that have arisen as her actual use of the server. From Clinton's perspective, she

has not broken any law (a positive judgment of propriety), and in fact, the controversy has been manufactured by other “political opponents and journalists.” The author continues:

The tortured path to what some of Mrs. Clinton's supporters saw as an overdue and essential step is the story of a presidential campaign in flux, adapting to unanticipated challenges it was not entirely prepared to handle-- and of a candidate whose instincts, over a tumultuous lifetime in politics, have repeatedly guided her toward digging in, not giving in, when under attack.

Having just stated Clinton relented on Tuesday, the journalist presupposes that Clinton’s path to an apology was “tortured.” That is, the journalist frames this negative assessment monoglossically, as the *only* possible interpretation of the “path” to her apology. Further, not only is her path tortured, it is also “overdue” and “essential,” since according to “some of Clintons’ supporters,” she did not apologize soon enough. Interestingly these supporters are anonymized as “some” allowing the author to attribute the negative assessment to someone else, thus legitimizing their claim with a citation without actually citing a specific human actor. Additionally, Clinton’s campaign is presupposed to be “in flux” suggesting a negative assessment of her campaign as chaotic given the earlier presupposed “tortured path” and “overdue” step. Also, that the campaign is said to be “adapting to unanticipated challenges it was not entirely prepared to handle,” implies Clinton’s campaign may lack foresight and is incapable of handling challenges. Further, Clinton is categorically described as having “instincts” that “have repeatedly guided her toward digging in not giving in.” Having “instincts” is typically not assumed to be negative, but in the context of how she is described by the *NYT* it suggests she typically operates in a fixed pattern that is negative. Further still, in other contexts, “digging in, not giving in, when under attack” (implying she is currently under attack) might be seen as

tenacious—an act of perseverance—but because of the earlier implied negative judgments, it is more likely meant as a characteristic of being stubborn. The *NYT* continues:

But Mrs. Clinton, sliding in the polls -- which show voters increasingly questioning her trustworthiness-- does not want to see this shot at the presidency slip away. And the pleas from friends and advisers became more fervent almost a month ago, according to interviews with a half-dozen people with direct knowledge of the discussions, most of whom insisted on anonymity to discuss private conversations.

Having established Clinton's tortured path, the author counters the previous charge that Clinton as a candidate does not give in ("But Mrs. Clinton), telling readers what Clinton does not want—"to see this shot at the presidency slip away." The use of the counter "But" counters our expectation that Clinton does not want to presidency to slip away, despite being stubborn ("digging in, not giving in"). That is, the implication is that the presidency may actually slip away because of her stubbornness. Moreover, not only is Clinton described as "sliding in the polls" (an implied negative judgment of capacity) and questioned for her "trustworthiness" (an implied negative judgement of veracity), her "friends and advisors" have also been fervently pleading with her to apologize. In noting this, the author solidifies a negative portrait of Clinton as stubborn, uncooperative, and untrustworthy—all undesirable traits in a presidential candidate. Once again, in short the journalists are not concerned about the email server and national security, but instead care about the characterological portraits of Clinton —her character and tendencies as a candidate (particularly her tendencies to dismiss critics). In other words, her tendency to be the stubborn, scrappy—digging in, not giving in, candidate who cannot bring herself to admit mistakes. By the end, the framing of Clinton's current actions are used to build a negative character frame of her as recalcitrant.

(4) Missing Emails and the Benghazi Hearing

On September 29th, a few weeks before Clinton would testify at the Benghazi hearing, House Republican Majority Leader, Kevin McCarthy, was interviewed on television by Fox News host, Sean Hannity, regarding McCarthy's run for Speaker of the House. When asked about the position, McCarthy made the following comments:

What you're going to see is a conservative speaker, that takes a conservative Congress, that puts a strategy to fight and win. And let me give you one example. Everybody thought Hillary Clinton was unbeatable, right?

But we put together a Benghazi special committee. A select committee. What are her numbers today? Her numbers are dropping. Why? Because she's untrustable. But no one would have known that any of that had happened had we not fought to make that happen.

This claim was later hedged by McCarthy, yet still many Democratic pundits perceived McCarthy's comments as confirmation that the Benghazi Committee purely political and assembled to damage Clinton's reputation, rather than to actually seek justice.

At this time focus has shifted once again to the "missing emails"—that is the emails Clinton says she deleted because they were of personal nature and not relevant to government business. The following passage raises questions about Clinton's fitness for office as Secretary of State, and perhaps by extension the office of the Presidency (of which she is currently pursuing). The *WSJ* writes:

An archive of records that Mrs. Clinton, the Democratic Party's 2016 presidential front-runner, turned over to the State Department doesn't begin until March 18, 2009, though

she took office as secretary of state in late January of that year. The missing emails raise more questions about her stewardship of official documents during her tenure and whether there is a complete record of the early diplomatic efforts of President Barack Obama's administration.

The potential significance of the missing emails, which Mrs. Clinton's aides acknowledge and say she no longer can retrieve, came to light last week when a chain of online correspondence between her and former Gen. David Petraeus was found on Defense Department servers. Those messages, which included work-related personnel matters, dated to the period missing from Mrs. Clinton's records.

The missing records will provide fresh fodder for Mrs. Clinton's political opponents and members of Congress investigating her email practices.

In the first sentence the author notes that Clinton's archive of records do not begin "until March 18, 2009, although she took office as secretary of state in January of that year," immediately using countering resources to oppose what we would expect. Then, the missing emails "raise more questions about her stewardship of official documents," directly appraising her capacity as Secretary of State and whether she kept complete records. These missing emails are then described as having "potential significance," suggesting a level of investment the public should have in Clinton's behavior. Finally, that the missing records "will provide fresh fodder" for opponents and the Congressional investigation implies the missing records make Clinton look bad (another negative judgment of capacity), as though she is not capable of keeping records.

Ultimately, the “fodder”—or fresh material—can be used as another strike against Clinton’s fitness. We see this again from the *NYT* when they write:

This February, the State Department gave the committee 300 of Mrs. Clinton's emails. That month, in what one committee member described as a "very tense" meeting, State Department officials acknowledged that Mrs. Clinton had not had a government account. She had used her private email for all of her official business, leaving open the possibility that her account contained classified information. (Having classified information outside a secure government account is illegal.

Though the passage does not directly call Clinton’s capacity into question, the author not only entertains Clinton did something she should not have (keeping classified information), but also that she acted illegally. Further, the meeting is described as “very tense” according to “one committee member,” indicating State Department officials and/or those in the meeting felt anxious or stressed. Ultimately, the reader is left questioning Clinton’s behavior: either she unknowingly did something she should not have (making her a stooge), or she intentionally broke the law (making her a criminal).

Conclusion

Building from Chapter 2, Chapter 3 has further established how journalists subtly shaped normative beliefs about how Clinton should behave through explicit and implicitly judgments. In contrast to the last chapter, the opening of the FBI investigation proved to be a catalyst for the increase in implied negative judgments, questions raised about her handling of events, and affective insecurity regarding her fitness. As the FBI began sorting through Clinton’s emails, reporters placed appreciative value in the investigation itself. That is, they continually note the

investigation's importance, while allowing judgmental inferences of Clinton as unreliable and untrustworthy. Next, Clinton's televised interview with Muir and subsequent coverage by the *NYT* and *WSJ* proved significant in further framing Clinton as an individual who is incapable of taking responsibility for their actions. Further, her decisions, which Muir repeatedly insist Clinton admit were a mistake, works as a form of ritualistic public punishment. The insistence that she repeatedly apologize publicly is then followed by coverage that keeps the apology issue alive, ultimately framing Clinton as recalcitrant. Finally, in reporting Clinton's testimony at the Benghazi hearing, her record-keeping practices are further questioned, leaving the reader to believe Clinton is either a stooge or a criminal.

While this chapter has explored moments when Clinton was explicitly the focus of the narrative, the next chapter will track how she continues to be framed as unfit despite others seemingly being the center of the media's attention. Further, questions still remain: What were the results of the FBI's investigation? Were the "missing emails" ever recovered? To what extent will these decontextualized inferences develop into explicit arguments?

CHAPTER 4: PERFORMING DUE DILLIGENCE

In July 2016, approximately nine months after Clinton testified before the Benghazi Committee, then FBI Director, James Comey, announced the FBI concluded its investigation into Clinton's private email use, but called her actions "extremely careless." Three months later, on the eve of the presidential election, he would announce that the investigation was being reopened. Building from the previous two chapters, this chapter will account for the final three critical discourse moments that occurred during the last phase of Clinton's presidential campaign, including:

1. Comey's closing of the FBI investigation
2. Wikileaks's publication of DNC emails and the Reopening of the FBI investigation (also known as the "October Surprise/Bombshell")
3. The November election

In this chapter I continue to use Martin and White's appraisal framework to analyze coverage of Clinton in 59 newspaper articles (32 from the *NYT* and 27 from the *WSJ*). As in previous chapters, one of my goals is to reveal how a granular approach to analyzing news discourse as it circulates can describe how the mainstream media can keep an issue salient over time. A second goal is to better understand the use of inferences as a rhetorical device to entertain negative judgments, and to document, across time, the implications those inferences have for leading audiences to believe the worst about someone. I argue while news coverage focused more explicitly on Comey's intervention in the investigation and political campaign, implicit judgments are used to frame (or in the least have the effect of framing) Clinton as suspicious and incompetent.

Figure 1 shows the number of *explicitly inscribed* judgments made about Clinton, highlighting in blue the most frequent judgments in this third phase¹¹

¹¹ The three blue columns represent high frequency judgments of 26 or more.

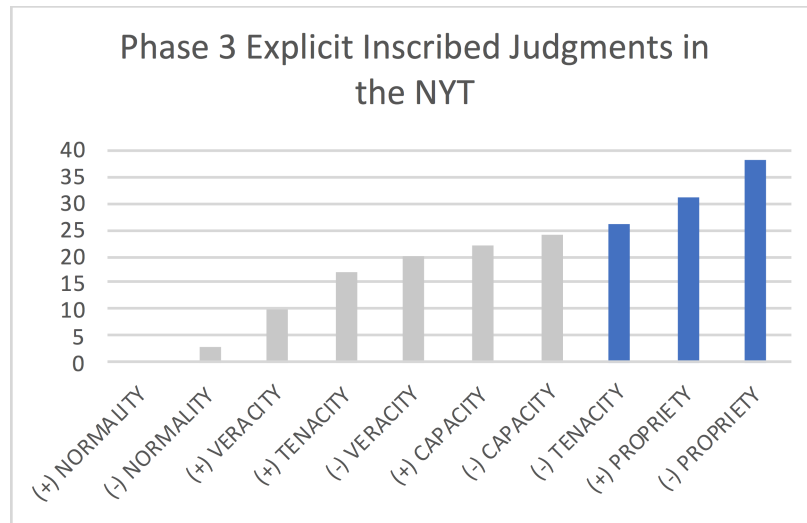


Figure 1: The NYT attributed both positive and negative attitudinal judgments about Clinton.

Unlike previous phases, there is greater distinction between positive and negative appreciation across sources attributed. For instance, appraisals of negative tenacity are mostly attributed to Comey, or quoted by others. Meanwhile, the journalists themselves offer judgments of negative propriety, entertaining whether Clinton did something wrong. Other negative judgments come from Trump and the Republicans, and the positive propriety comes mostly from Comey and the Democrats.

Figure 2 similarly shows the number of *explicitly inscribed* judgments made about Clinton in the *WSJ*, highlighting the judgments made most frequently.

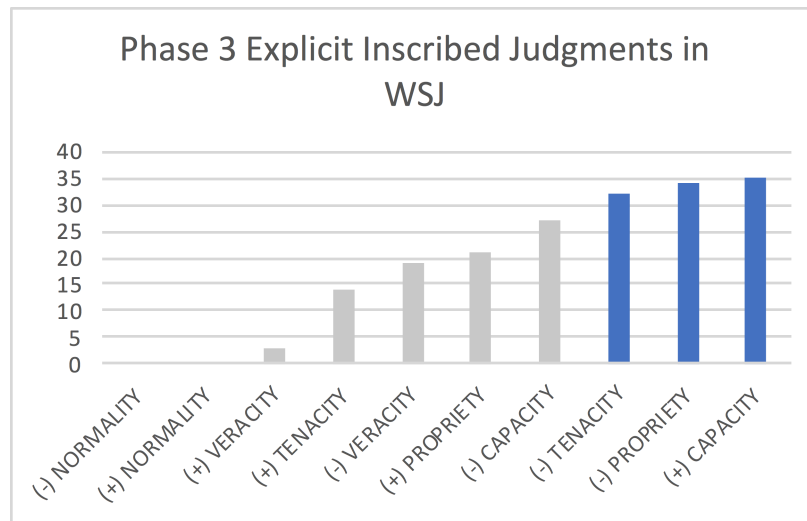


Figure 2: The WSJ attributed both positive and negative judgments about Clinton.

Similar to the *NYT*, appraisals of negative tenacity are mostly attributed to Comey, or quoted by others, and the negative propriety comes from the journalists and other Republicans. A slight distinction is shown in appraisals of positive capacity, which represent times when Clinton was leading in the polls.

My analysis also shows the frequency of *implicitly invoked judgments*, with negative tokens of propriety appearing most frequently. Figures 3 and 4 show the number of *invoked judgments* made against Clinton, highlighting the most recurrent judgments¹² in blue.

¹² For both Figure 3 and 4, the blue column shows where I will focus my analysis, demonstrating negative judgments of impropriety are made most frequently against Clinton.

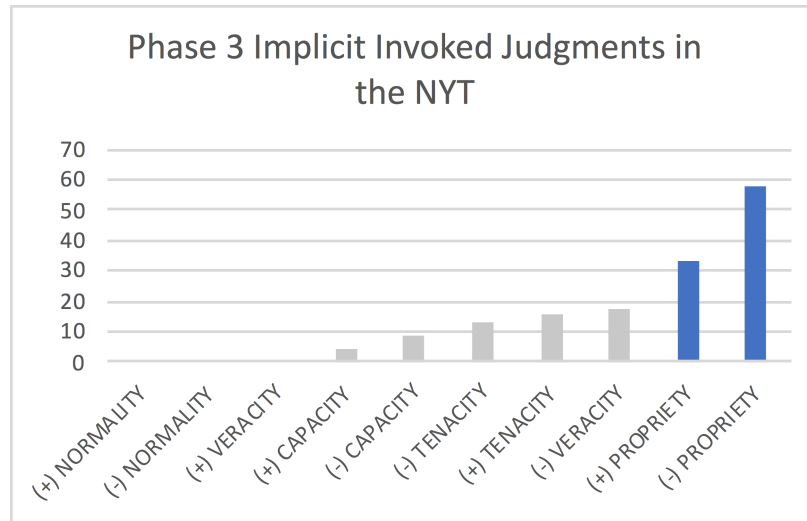


Figure 3: The NYT invoked both positive and negative propriety about Clinton.

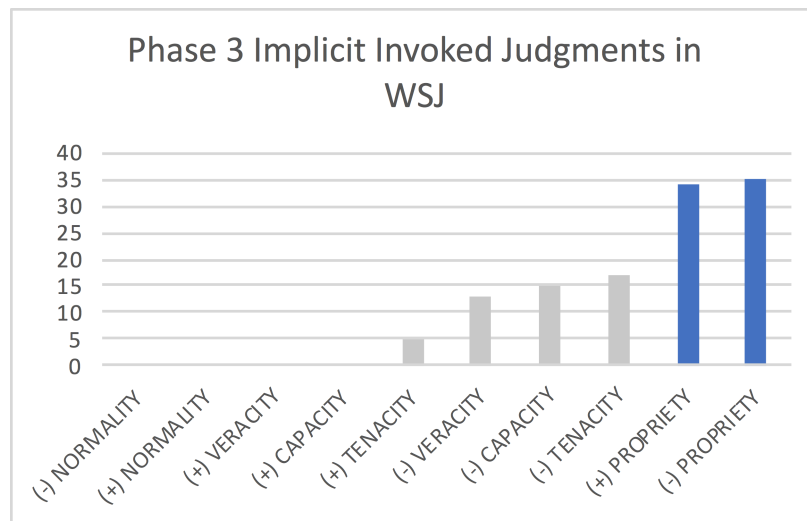


Figure 4: The NYT invoked both positive and negative judgments about Clinton.

Another trend not shown in the tables concerns appraisals of appreciation. To recall, appreciation refers to the evaluation of things: in general terms “our ‘reactions’ to things (do they catch our attention; do they please us?), their ‘composition’ (balance and complexity), and their ‘value’ (how innovative, authentic, timely, etc) (Martin and White 2007; 56). In this phase, the number of appraisals of value nearly triples¹³, with a particular focus on appraising the value of emails found on Anthony Weiner’s laptop, and the handling of classified information. Finally,

¹³ NYT explicit (+) valuation = 62
 WSJ explicit (+) valuation = 43

there is a spike in the number of affective appraisals of insecurity, specifically insecurity about the impact of the FBI's investigation in how voters perceive Clinton.

Analysis

This final analysis will describe how implicit judgments are used to discredit Clinton's fitness, veracity, and propriety. I document how journalists worked to build negative judgments about Clinton's behavior — particularly strengthening frames of her as suspicious as incompetent. I will follow the chronology of major events during the third and final phase, analyzing appraisals of Clinton in each event when: 1) Comey first intervenes to announce the findings of the FBI investigation, 2) The "October Surprise/Bombshell" involving WikiLeaks and Anthony Weiner, and 3) the days leading up to the November 2016 presidential election day.

Comey 'Closes' Investigation - Comey's First Intervention

Prior to Comey announcing the findings of his investigation, on June 27th, 2016, former president and husband to Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton, met Attorney General Loretta Lynch privately aboard Lynch's State Department jet, parked in Phoenix, Arizona. At the time a local Phoenix news station reported that the meeting took place, and many government officials and media reporters suspected that the timing of the meeting was suspicious given Lynch's Department of Justice was still investigating Clinton's handling of classified information sent through her private email server account. A few weeks later, nearly ten months after Clinton testified before the Benghazi committee, on July 5th, 2016 James Comey read the following statement to press and television reporters at the FBI headquarters in Washington, DC:

“Although we did not find clear evidence that Secretary Clinton or her colleagues intended to violate laws governing the handling of classified information, there is evidence that they were extremely careless in their handling of very sensitive, highly classified information.”

Comey begins by immediately countering our expectation that since the FBI *would* find clear evidence of intent to violate the law, then Clinton did nothing wrong. But, counter to that expectation (“Although we did not find clear evidence”), Clinton was in fact “extremely careless” in her handling of classified information. Here the subordinate clause —“although we did not find any clear evidence that Secretary Clinton or her colleagues intended to violate laws governing the handling of classified information”—indicates what readers are supposed to take as given information, while the stress position in the main clause (the appraisal of Clinton and her colleagues being “extremely careless”) indicates new and important information for readers. In other words, even though Clinton did not *intend* to violate any laws (a negative judgment of propriety), she was “extremely careless” (a heightened negative judgment of tenacity) in the handling of “very sensitive, highly classified information” (a positive appraisal of value, indicating the worth of the information). Here he counters an expectation that he thinks might be inferred from his first clause. Namely, we might expect that since the FBI found no clear evidence of intent to violate the law, then Clinton did nothing wrong. But counter to that expectation Clinton was in fact “extremely careless” in her handling of classified information. Further, the premodifier “clear” in “clear evidence” is interesting because it seems to suggest or at least make room for the possibility that there was some unclear or ambiguous evidence of intent to violate the law, just not clear enough. In addition, the force behind this appraisal is intensified with the adverbs “very” and “highly” to describe the sensitive and classified nature of

information Clinton carelessly handled. Comey then continues, implying a negative judgment against Clinton through the use of modal obligation. He states:

....None of these e-mails should have been on any kind of unclassified system, but their presence is especially concerning because all of these e-mails were housed on unclassified personal servers not even supported by full-time security staff, like those found at Departments and Agencies of the U.S. Government—or even with a commercial service like Gmail.

In stating “none of these emails [which were handled carelessly] should have been on any kind of classified system,” Comey subtly criticizes Clinton’s behavior. As Martin and White (2005) remind us, modulations of social obligation like “should” can be related to “lexicalized judgments of propriety,” thus when Comey states “none of these emails should have been on any kind of unclassified system,” he implies someone acted beyond reproach (55). Note further the intensified negation of “None.” Comey could have just said, “These emails should not have been...” but the “None of these” intensifies the implied judgment. The “any” does similar work. “Any” is not strictly necessary except for the purpose of intensified this judgment. Clinton or her colleagues are also implicated as the subject of the negative judgment given they are the ones responsible for carelessly handling information. That “none of these emails should have been on any kind of unclassified system” is immediately countered (“but”) and amplified with the charge that their presence is “especially concerning” (an intensified negative affect of insecurity), because the servers housing these emails were “not even supported by full-time security staff...or even with a commercial service like Gmail.” Note that the negated adverbial expressions, “not even” and “or even,” imply and counter an expectation that the servers *should have been supported* by security staff and commercial services. Comey then continues:

....There is evidence to support a conclusion that any reasonable person in Secretary Clinton's position, or in the position of those government employees with whom she was corresponding about these matters, should have known that an unclassified system was no place for that conversation.

Interestingly, he does not directly state that Clinton is not a reasonable person, but rather implies that Clinton is not a reasonable person (a negative judgment of capacity). Read as an enthymeme, the reader must provide the assumption:

- 1). There is evidence to support a conclusion that any reasonable person in Secretary Clinton's position should have known that an unclassified system was no place for that conversation
- 2). Clinton did not know that an unclassified system was no place for that conversation
- 3). Clinton is not reasonable person

Comey then continues, highlighting what he sees as the importance of marked classified information:

Separately, it is important to say something about the marking of classified information.

Only a very small number of the e-mails containing classified information bore markings indicating the presence of classified information. But even if information is not marked "classified" in an e-mail, participants who know or should know that the subject matter is classified are still obligated to protect it.

First, Comey makes a point to indicate that apart from someone not doing their job properly ("Separately"), there is other important information to share (a positive appraisal of value) regarding the marking of classified information ("it is important to say something about the marking of classified information"). The counter "only a very small number" (as opposed to a large number that we might expect), seems to actually present Clinton in a better light—as if to suggest that as opposed to what we would expect, "only a very small number [intensifying the size of the number]" appeared to indicate classified information. On its own this could be read as

a defense of Clinton and her staff; assuming Clinton cannot be faulted for storing classified information because only a “small number of emails” bore classified markings. Therefore, Clinton did not act completely incompetently. However, the counter in the next sentence, “But even if” works to entertain that Clinton still should have known better. The combination of the double counter (“but even”) and conditional (“if”) limits the alternatives wherein Clinton could be let off the hook. That is, despite entertaining a reality where information is not marked classified, “participants who know or should know” (presumably Clinton) are “still obligated” (counter to what others may think) to protect the information. Thus, Comey challenges Clinton’s previous defense of not knowing the emails were classified as an excuse for not handling them properly. At this point, feigning ignorance is not enough to excuse Clinton’s behavior. And again, given the implied judgments made against Clinton in the previous two news phases, by this point Comey does not even need to say Clinton’s name—he only says “participants who know or should know”—yet readers are arguably able to intuit this is about Clinton’s behavior. Comey continues:

While not the focus of our investigation, we also developed evidence that the security culture of the State Department in general, and with respect to use of unclassified e-mail systems in particular, was generally lacking in the kind of care for classified information found elsewhere in the government.

....Although there is evidence of potential violations of the statutes regarding the handling of classified information, our judgment is that no reasonable prosecutor would bring such a case.

First, he criticizes the security culture at the State Department as being “generally lacking in the kind of care for classified information” (a negative judgment of tenacity), then simultaneously asserts it is possible federal statutes were violated (“there is evidence of potential violations”) without attributing the potential violation to any specific individual or group, while also countering that entertained judgment by stating “no reasonable prosecutor would bring such a case.” Comey is careful not to name those who potentially violated federal statutes, but given he, moments before, criticized the security culture at the State Department, it would not be unreasonable for the audience to presume he is speaking about a State Department employee, and likely Clinton. His choice to bring up possible evidence of potential violations despite immediately countering the assertion is also odd. In doing so Comey leaves the door open for readers to make negative connections—to think it is possible Clinton violated statutes, leaving the public to believe the worst. Comey then provides further detail, explaining what would be needed to bringing criminal charges. He states:

In looking back at our investigations into mishandling or removal of classified information, we cannot find a case that would support bringing criminal charges on these facts. All the cases prosecuted involved some combination of: clearly intentional and willful mishandling of classified information; or vast quantities of materials exposed in such a way as to support an inference of intentional misconduct; or indications of disloyalty to the United States; or efforts to obstruct justice. We do not see those things here.

Having explained why Clinton is not being charged with a criminal offense (“we cannot find a case that would support bringing criminal charges on these facts”), Comey goes on to lay out what Clinton would have needed to have done to be charged, and having just used “would”

several times as an entertaining resource to claim Clinton and individuals at the Statement did not behave in manner that warrants criminal charges, he then immediately opens the floodgate to entertain a reality wherein someone who *did* engage in the same activities as Clinton would be charged as a criminal. It is worth noting at this time one of the memorable criticisms Clinton regularly faced was being let off the hook due to her elite status, whereas people of lesser stature were charged with mishandling classified information, even if they did not do it intentionally. Here Comey seems to be trying to thwart that kind of charge by constructing a comparison with previous cases (“All cases prosecuted involved...”); yet, this claim may not actually hold up to scrutiny. In fact, as the co-founder of *The Intercept*, Glenn Greenwald argued in July 2016, that Comey’s decision to not recommend Clinton be shared with any crime is puzzling given Washington’s history of punishing secrecy violations. That is, what is problematic is not necessarily that certain individuals were prosecuted (though many do argue this), but that the extent of their sanctions is unfair when compared to what Clinton did.¹⁴ Comey then further clarifies:

To be clear, this is not to suggest that in similar circumstances, a person who engaged in this activity would face no consequences. To the contrary, those individuals are often subject to security or administrative sanctions. But that is not what we are deciding now.

As a result, although the Department of Justice makes final decisions on matters like this, we are expressing to Justice our view that no charges are appropriate in this case.”

¹⁴ According to Greenwald, one need only look so far as Chelsea Mannings’ case or former U.S. Navy sailor, Kristian Saucier for examples of those with lesser stature being charged with mishandling classified information, even if done so unintentionally. See Greenwald’s July 5th 2016 *Intercept* piece, “Washington Has Been Obsessed With Punishing Secrecy Violations — Until Hillary Clinton” and Josh Gerstein’s May 27th 2016 *Politico* piece, “Sub Sailors Photo Case Draws Comparison to Clinton emails” for more context.

Comey begins by clarifying (“To be clear”) that he is not suggesting others who “engaged in this activity” would not face consequences; in fact he states, “To the contrary those individuals [i.e. people who behave like Clinton did] are often subject to security or administrative sanctions.” The decision to introduce this information is puzzling. Readers may recall another instance roughly one year prior wherein a Navy Engineer, Bryan Nishimura was sentenced to two years of probably and a fine for mishandling classified military materials. So, at this point the reader may be left to make inferences about the relevance and meaning of Comey’s statement : *if other people in a similar position have faced sanctions, why isn’t Clinton facing sanctions? Or, for that matter, anyone else at the State Department who was involved?* Ultimately, his statement is a bit confusing because he does not land clearly on what we are supposed to take away. Some readers may think, *What makes Clinton special? If others have been subject to security or administrative sanctions, why isn’t Clinton?* Furthermore, it is puzzling that he brings up the fact “To be clear” (a declarative statement) it is still possible for people to get in trouble over this kind of behavior. Having just earlier declared there is insufficient evidence to charge her with a crime, this statement creates doubt about her propriety, and his reason not to punish Clinton in some way seems to be based on an arbitrary decision.

Contextually, it is also important to note that at this time in addition to questions about equitable sanctions for secrecy violations, readers may also recall that approximately two months after Comey’s initial July 2016 recommendation that Clinton not be charged with a criminal offense, in September 2016 the public learned an aide to former President Bill Clinton aide, Justin Cooper, had used a hammer to destroy Clinton’s old mobile devices¹⁵ . According to FBI documents, Clinton aide Justin Cooper “did recall two instances where he destroyed Clinton’s

¹⁵ See the September 2nd 2016 article from the *Business Insider* entitled, “FBI: FBI: Aide destroyed 2 of Clinton's phones by 'breaking them in half or hitting them with a hammer’” for more information.

old mobile devices by breaking them in half or hitting them with a hammer.” Clinton’s mobile device usage and the destruction of two mobile devices during her time as Secretary of State became significant to the investigation given those devices may have been used to send emails on Clinton’s private email server. While destroying these devices ultimately never impacted the FBI’s decision to recommend against criminal charges, the optics were not good. When electronic devices are destroyed it is typically to protect information that the user does not want compromised, and in this case Clinton already faced questions about her honesty.

Reports Following Comey’s Statement

Soon after Comey gave his statement to reporters at the FBI headquarters in Washington, DC, both the NYT and WSJ reported on the FBI’s findings and Comey’s statement, focusing on how Comey characterized Clinton’s behavior. In the July 6th piece, “F.B.I. Findings Damage Many of Clinton’s Claims,” the author writes:

Even as he declined to recommend a criminal case against Hillary Clinton, the F.B.I. director, James B. Comey, undercut many of the arguments she has used to play down her use of a private email server while secretary of state, describing a series of questionable, even reckless, decisions made by her and her aides.

Here the author immediately makes Clinton look less than ideal, beginning by countering Comey’s recommendations and casting Clinton as less fit (“even as he declined to recommend...[Comey] undercut many of the arguments she [Clinton] has used”). One might expect that if criminal cases are not recommended against the individual whom the FBI is investigating that the FBI director would not undercut their arguments. In other words, if a person being investigated acted lawfully, there would be no need to disagree with their claims.

However, the author implies doubt about Clinton's behavior. In addition, not only is Comey undercutting Clinton's arguments about the significance of the server ("arguments she has used to play down her use of a private email server"), he describes decisions made by Clinton and her aides as "questionable, even reckless" (both negative judgments of tenacity). Further, the journalist makes a possible negative judgment of veracity. Taken together with the headline, "F.B.I. Findings Damage Many of Clinton's Claims," the notion that her "arguments to play down" her server usage have been "undercut" seems to suggest 1) that her behavior was indefensible (at least by the standards Clinton was using); and perhaps that Clinton's arguments were disingenuous, i.e. she was less than truthful. The author continues:

At least 110 emails sent through her server contained information that was classified at the time it was sent, he said, meaning it should never have been sent or received on an unclassified computer network -- not hers, not even the State Department's official state.gov system. ["07_06_16FBIFindingsDamageClintonsClaims"]

In describing that "at least 110 emails sent through her server" contained classified information, the author entertains the possibility that *more than* 110 emails contained classified information. Notably, the author chooses to intensify that Clinton "should never have sent or received"—not only should it not have been done, it *never* should have been done, counter to what we might expect, under any circumstances ("not hers, not even the State Department's official state.gov system"). The author resumes:

That fact refutes the core argument she and others have made: that the entire controversy turned on the overzealous, after-the-fact classification of emails as they were being made public under the Freedom of Information Act, rather than the mishandling of the nation's secrets.

Mr. Comey's announcement was, arguably, the worst possible good news Mrs. Clinton's presidential campaign could have hoped for: no criminal charges, but a pointed refutation of statements like one she flatly made last August. "I did not send classified material," she said then. ["07_06_16FBIFindingsDamage ClintonsClaims"]

Finally, that “at least 110 emails” were classified at the time they were sent “refutes the core argument she and other have made,” implying that she did indeed mishandle nation’s secrets (a negative judgement of capacity). This framing of what was mishandled (“nation’s secrets”) is also jingoistic in that the author could have written “classified material” but goes for “the nation’s secrets” to emphasize a kind of patriotic betrayal of the entire “nation’s” confidence. Further, according to the author, Comey’s announcement is not good news for Clinton. Not only that, if any possible good news could have come (which is presumed to be unlikely), this is the worst kind. That is, Comey’s announcement is not helping Clinton look very honest or lawful. As seen in previous excerpts, appraisals are ordered as an explicit positive judgment, immediately countered with an implied negative judgment. Not only does Comey refute Clinton, the authors appraise his refutation as “pointed” and remind readers what Clinton has said by quoting her directly (“I did not send classified material”). Again, this confirms that while Clinton is not a criminal, she is not capable of handling sensitive, important government matters, and further implies she was lying (or most charitably, completely mistaken and negligent).

The *NYT* also implies that Clinton and “others” mishandled classified information. They write:

In the end, as damning as Mr. Comey's conclusion was, he did not claim that Mrs. Clinton's behavior had compromised any program or operation.

"There was no assertion of damage to national security because of this episode," Mr. Aftergood said.

In the handling of classified information, however, any carelessness is cause for concern.
Mr. Comey noted that people who are careless often face administrative punishment,
echoing some officials at the State Department who have privately suggested that a
similar misstep could severely harm their careers.

The author directly appraises Comey's conclusions as "damning," indicating they strongly suggested wrongdoing or guilt on Clinton's part. The wrongdoing is in reference to Clinton's carelessness in handling information, not in compromising "any program or operation." The author then acknowledges the director of the Project on Government Secrecy at the Federation of American Scientists, Steven Aftergood's, claim that there was "no assertion of damage to national security because of this episode," providing support for the previous claim that Clinton did not compromise national security (a positive judgment of propriety). Yet, the author immediately counters this positive judgment ("In the handling of classified information, however") by suggesting how we (presumably anyone reading) should feel about her carelessness ("any carelessness is cause for concern"). The concern (a negative affect of insecurity) is not attributed to any person, so it's presumed everyone ought to feel it. Further, the author acknowledges what Comey has noted—"that people who are careless often face administering punishment," which happens to also echo what has been said by "some officials at the State Department" —if this could harm others then it could harm Clinton. In the end, the *NYT* entertains doubt about Clinton's ability to carry out a successful political career. The author does

this by countering one source (Mr. Aftergood) with another (Mr. Comey and officials at the State Department), implying that Clinton may (or perhaps should) face “administrative punishment” that could “harm [her] career”—possibly implying that this episode could damage Clinton’s chances of becoming president.

DNC Hack and the “October Surprise/Bombshell”

In the month of October 2016 two new smaller, yet significant moments emerge where new information is brought to light. One is the publication of hacked emails on Wikileaks, and the other is the investigation of Anthony Weiner’s emails which were thought to be potentially related to Clinton. In either case, Clinton and her aides were not in control of the dissemination, and not in control of how information was circulated or the impact it would have in how Clinton was perceived. This next section will document significant coverage surrounding these moments.

Less than a month after Comey concluded the FBI investigation, ruling her behavior as law-abiding but careless, Russian intelligence agency hackers stole a collection of Democratic National Committee (DNC) emails. These emails were soon leaked to the website DCLeaks and, most notably, the WikiLeaks organization on July 22nd 2016, prior to the Democratic National Convention. Among these emails were messages from Clinton’s campaign chairman, John Podesta, revealing correspondence between Clinton and her aides, including messages that did not portray Clinton in the most positive light. Topically, some of those emails included:

- 1) Podesta’s notes about what Clinton said to Goldman Sachs (finally publicized after the *NYT* editorial board had called for Clinton to release her Goldman Sachs transcripts and she refused);
- 2) The DNC’s apparent bias against Bernie Sanders; 3) The Clinton team’s proposed strategy to elevate “piped piper” candidates like Trump, whom they thought they would more easily beat,

and most relevant for my project; 4) The internal controversy about Clinton's handling of news about her State Department emails.

Journalists may have found these emails newsworthy because they not only introduced insider information that typically is only available to Clinton's inner circle or those part of the DNC establishment, they also rather directly support frames of "Clinton as suspicious, trying to evade being forthcoming about her behavior" and frames of "Clinton as incompetent or unfit." For example, in one email exchange between John Podesta and close Clinton adviser Neera Tanden on September 6, 2015 they complained about Clinton's "terrible instincts."¹⁶ Podesta wrote:

Biden will get in [.]

We are still way more likely than not to win nomination [.]

We've taken on a lot of water that won't be easy to pump out of the boat.

Most of that has to do with terrible decisions made pre-campaign, but a lot has to do with her instincts.

She's nervous so prepping more and performing better.

Got to do something to pump up excitement but not certain how to do that. In discussing the fear that Vice President Joe Biden would join the Democratic primary race, Podesta's comments imply insecurity within the Clinton campaign, and implicitly judge Clinton as incompetent ("but a lot has to do with her instincts"). This implicitly judgment is supported further by appraising her as "nervous" (a negative affect of insecurity") and works to corroborate the "Clinton as incompetent or unfit" frame. Tanden then replied:

You know I'm not a sycophant to you by any means. But the thing that makes me most confident she will prevail is that you are there.

¹⁶ See <https://wikileaks.org/dnc-emails/> to search the DNC email database.

Almost no one knows better [than] me that her instincts can be terrible.

She does have to give time to allow new things to take hold. As if it is not bad enough to have your own campaign chairman imply your instincts are not great, her close adviser then stokes the flames by explicitly acknowledging that “her instincts can be terrible.” Further, she admits that “I’m not a sycophant to you by any means. But the thing that makes me most confident she will prevail is that you are there.” While not explicitly a judgment against Clinton, Tanden’s decision to introduce the idea of being a sycophant (someone who acts obsequiously toward someone important in order to gain advantage) only to counter the characterization (“but the thing”) seems odd given the next thing she says is she is confident Clinton will prevail because “you [Podesta] are there.” This is then immediately followed with Tanden’s explicitly negative appraisal of Clinton’s instincts as “terrible.” It is possible readers at this point may think *Shouldn’t campaign advisers be most confident in the candidate? And if they are not, and the candidate’s instincts are terrible, perhaps she is not a competent candidate.* Taken together, this exchange suggests Clinton is not competent and thus may not be fit as a presidential candidate.

It also relevant to note in the timeline it has been a year and seven months since Clinton’s private email use was first reported. To this point, as the previous chapters have shown, a significant amount of news coverage has focused on reporting Clinton’s behavior and how people outside Clinton’s circle reacted to the handling and use of the email server. However, with the release of messages between Clinton staff and campaign members, the public had access to the inner dynamics of Clinton’s team for the first time. That is, it was a behind-the-scenes look into what Clinton’s team said about her (and others) when they didn’t think anyone was listening.

Not surprisingly, not long after the publication of hacked emails on Wikileaks, journalists began covering the leaked emails. For example, in the article, “Emails Show Split on Server

Issue, ” the *WSJ* report on the leaked emails that were stolen from John Podesta’s email account.

The *WSJ* reported the following:

Newly released emails show deep divisions within Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton's political circle over the handling of the controversy surrounding her use of a private email server while she was secretary of state, with some upset that the arrangement wasn't publicly disclosed far earlier.

According to an exchange stolen from the email account of Clinton campaign Chairman John Podesta and released by the WikiLeaks website Tuesday, Mr. Podesta believed her former State Department staff mismanaged the political fallout from the email issue.

Not only do the newly released stolen emails “show deep divisions...over the handling of the controversy surrounding her use of a private email,” some people in her “political circle” are “upset that the arrangement wasn’t publicly disclosed far earlier.” On its own, having “deep divisions” within a campaign may suggest they are incapable of working harmoniously together. That those some of those same people in Clinton’s political circle are also “upset [a negative affect of insecurity] that the arrangement wasn’t publicly disclosed far earlier” indicates they are not capable of managing Clinton (a negative implied judgment of capacity). Further the intensifier “far” in “far earlier” also elevates the implied judgment to negative tenacity and veracity on the part of Clinton and her inner circle (that they should have been more forthcoming). The author then provides further textual support for the alleged “deep divisions” within Clinton’s inner circle by reporting a stolen email exchange from Clinton’s campaign Chairman, John Podesta’s, email account. The stolen exchange, “released by the WikiLeaks website Tuesday” reveals that “Mr. Podesta believed her [Clinton’s] former State Department

staff mismanaged [a negative judgment of capacity] the political fallout from the email issue.”

The newsworthiness of this story seems to center around how Clinton responds during a crisis/controversy. The “scoop” is less about what she did with classified emails, and more about how she (mis)handled the “fallout.” Adding to the newsworthiness is the fact that controversy emerged in Clinton’s own camp (specifically with Podesta, an authoritative figure), suggesting real internal problems in the Clinton campaign. It would be one thing if this kind of judgment came from Clinton’s enemies, or even people neutral to Clinton, but it doesn’t—it comes from those who are supposed to be closest to her. The *WSJ* continues to acknowledge authoritative voices revealing further discord over Clinton’s advisors and drawing implicit negative judgments of veracity and capacity against Clinton and her team:

Clinton attorney David Kendall, former State Department Chief of Staff Cheryl Mills and former senior adviser Philippe Reines "sure weren't forthcoming on the facts here," Mr. Podesta wrote in an email to Neera Tanden, a progressive activist and a longtime ally of Mrs. Clinton.

Mr. Podesta and Ms. Tanden appeared concerned the advisers hadn't provided for the email arrangement to become public at a time when it could have done less political damage and avoided the suggestion Mrs. Clinton was hiding something. "This is a Cheryl special," Ms. Tanden wrote Mr. Podesta. "Why didn't they get this stuff out like 18 months ago? So crazy." [10_26_16EmailsShowSplitOnServerIssue]

According to Mr. Podesta, three of Clinton’s close allies (David Kendall, Cheryl Mills, and Philippe Reines) “sure weren’t forthcoming on the facts here,” implying a negative judgment of veracity against Clinton’s allies, and by association Clinton. Further, Podesta and Tanden (a

“progressive activist” and Clinton longtime ally) “appear concerned” (a negative affect of insecurity) that Clinton’s advisors had not made the email arrangement public at an appropriate time. The author also entertains that had the advisors acted differently they “could have done less damage and avoided the suggestion Mrs. Clinton was hiding something,” implying first that the advisors made a bad decision (an implied negative judgment of capacity), and second that Clinton may have been secretive (an explicit negative judgment of veracity). While the author attributes negative judgments to others, the *WSJ* is the one to characterize how Podesta and Tanden felt (“appeared concerned”). Tanden is then quoted in response to Podesta —“This is a Cheryl special,” which is another way of saying Cheryl Mills has a reputation of not being forthcoming. Yet, even still the inclusive pronoun “they” to describe those who did not “get this stuff out like 18 months ago” brings Clinton and her associates back in the picture. By this point the negative portrayals of those around Clinton wash back negatively on her. That is, Clinton is implicated because the people around her are under fire. This portrays a campaign that is not under control.

On the same day the *NYT* published a similar article detailing the communication between Clinton and her aides. This piece shares even more of the exchange, as well as appraises the affect of the Clinton’s aides more prominently in the title, which states, “‘We need to clean this up,’ Clinton aide frets in newly public email.” While the *WSJ* piece does characterize how Clinton’s advisors felt (“appeared concerned”), their characterization is more hedged (“appeared”) and is located in the middle of the article. The *NYT* piece, on the other hand, characterizes how a Clinton aide feels (“Clinton aide frets”) directly, and highlights an aide’s declaration that “We need to clean this up” which in a political context may be taken akin to a “cover up,” implying deceptive and impropriety behavior may have taken place within the

Clinton campaign. In addition, These negative characterizations are guaranteed exposure given they are made in the title of the news article. The author reports the extended exchange as follows:

"Why didn't they get this stuff out like 18 months ago? So crazy," Ms. Tanden wrote._
"Unbelievable," Mr. Podesta responded.

Ms. Tanden wrote back: "i guess I know the answer. they wanted to get away with it."

In this reporting we are introduced to more of the email exchange, and most immediately see Podesta's response to Tanden ("Unbelievable"), implying he disapproves of their behavior, or in the least is taken aback. Tanden's comments in return, though initially hedged ("i guess I know the answer") ultimately paint the "they" (Clinton and her aides) in a negative light. The assumption is that people who want to "get away with it" are not acting in good faith—when someone 'gets away with things' it is considered improper because they are attempting to behave badly without facing sanctions. In other words, that you did something wrong and are now trying to evade punishment. Thus, Clinton is further cemented as not only someone who makes bad decisions, but is also characterized as a deceitful/evasive.

Around the same time reports were exchanged detailing communication between members of Clinton's p
 contact with a fifteen year old child, the FBI came across emails between Weiner's estranged wife, Huma Abedin and Hillary Clinton. At the time Huma Abedin served as vice-chair of Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign; therefore the emails were deemed potentially relevant to the Clinton server investigation. Thus, two weeks before election day on October 28th, Comey informed Congress that the investigation into Clinton's server was being reopened. In his letter he states the following:

In connection with an unrelated case, the FBI has learned of the existence of emails that appear to be pertinent to the investigation. I am writing to inform you that the investigation team briefed me on this yesterday, and I agreed that the FBI should take appropriate investigative steps designed to allow investigators to review these emails to determine whether they contain classified information, as well as to assess their importance to our investigation.

Although the FBI cannot yet assess whether or not this material may be significance, and I cannot predict how long it will take us to complete this additional work, I believe it is important to update your Committees about our efforts in light of my previous testimony. Here Comey explains why the FBI thought it necessary to review the email between Weiner and Abedin and leaves room for uncertainty about whether or not these emails are significant to Clinton's email investigation.

Following the release of this letter, outlets picked up this new investigation, referring to it as the "October Surprise" and the "Email Bombshell," dramatically framing the final review of Clinton's emails and their impact on Clinton's campaign. Even though Comey's second review in no way altered his decision to not charge Clinton with criminal wrongdoing (which I discuss in the next section), the timing of the announcement and the fact that the press in part designated it with not only one, but two monikers kept the issue alive and unnecessarily reintroduced suspicion about Clinton. Figures 5 and 6 below show just a few examples of the kinds of dramatic headlines reported after Comey's announcement:

● This article is more than 3 years old

Clinton's 'October surprise' helps Trump in polls - but will it affect election day?

The Republican has been closing in on Clinton since her email investigation was reopened but popular vote doesn't always translate into electoral college gains

[*The Guardian*]

Will the Comey Bombshell Really Shake up the 2016 Race?

[*MSNBC*]

Figure 5: Headlines from *The Guardian* and *MSNBC* pose rhetorical “yes/no” questions about whether “Clinton’s October Surprise” and the “Comey Bombshell” affect election results.

Given the ongoing coverage of Comey’s investigation it would not be surprising to find readers answer this question with, “*Yes. The October Surprise/Bombshell will impact election day.*” And the presumption here is that it will negatively impact Clinton, possibly because there is lingering doubt and suspicion about her behavior. The fact that this question continues to be raised in addition be framed as incredibly dramatic only works to make this issue more overblown. As Figure 6 below shows, further headlines declare the alleged impact of the “October Surprise” and “Bombshell, as well presume Clinton’s need to “deal with Comey’s October surprise:”

The Fix

The FBI's October surprise just made Hillary Clinton's awful week even worse

[*The Washington Post*]

2016

How Clinton plans to deal with Comey's October surprise

The campaign is projecting confidence publicly, and working behind the scenes to use the latest email news to galvanize supporters.

By GABRIEL DEBENEDETTI | 10/30/2016 06:37 AM EDT

[*Politico*]

POLITICS | CAPITAL JOURNAL

FBI's Hillary Clinton Email Bombshell Will Be Felt After, Not Just Before, Election

It's hard to predict the revelation's effect on the presidential race, but its long-term effect on Washington won't be good

[*The Wall Street Journal*]

Figure 6: Headlines from *The Washington Post*, *Politico*, and *the Wall Street Journal* imply a negative impact of Comey's announcement.

While a discussion of these headlines is limited given the goals of this chapter and dissertation, it is worth noting how coverage of the "October Surprise/Bombshell" circulated not only in the *NYT* and *WSJ*, but in the majority of mainstream media outlets. Arguably this circulation only inflated the email issue and negative frames about Clinton.

In addition to dramatic headlines, reports continued to focus and amplify Clinton's private email server investigation, just days before the presidential election. For example, in the article, "FBI Reopens Clinton Email Probe," the *WSJ* reported:

Republicans said Friday's developments renewed the debate about Mrs. Clinton's judgment and her handling of secrets while serving as secretary of state between 2009 and 2013.

The latest twist in the long-running Clinton email saga comes at a point when at least 17 million people have already voted in the presidential race and the candidates are making their closing arguments.

First the author refers to Friday's developments (the discovery of emails sent between Clinton and Huma Abedin on Weiner's laptop) as, according to Republicans, as having "renewed the debate about Mrs. Clinton's judgment and her handling of secrets," immediately reminding readers that Clinton's judgment is up for question. Interesting too, is how in this formulation ("Friday's developments"), the debate is newer by others; not by the press. The author then follows by characterizing the FBI's update as "the latest twist" (an appreciative reaction, and a metaphor of dramatic entertainment) in the "long-running Clinton email saga," indicating the significance of this update. Given the author notes this "twist" in the "saga" comes when "at least 17 million people have already [counter to what we would expect] voted presumes voters might have changed their mind (i.e. not voted for Clinton) as a result of this FBI update. Because the "Clinton email saga" is connected to "her handling of secrets," and we already know her handling of secrets was careless, Clinton and the saga are again framed negatively.¹⁷

November Election

Less than 2 weeks after Comey's initial October 28th letter informing Congress of the existence of emails on Weiner's laptop, Comey wrote *another* letter to Congress, stating "Based

¹⁷ To further complicate and contextualize how discourse circulated about Clinton at this time, on November 2nd, Fox News anchor, Bret Baier reported on air that an FBI investigation of the Clinton Foundation was "likely" lead to an indictment, citing "sources with intimate knowledge of the FBI investigations into the Clinton emails and the Clinton Foundation" (Cummings 2016). He later apologized for Around this time Clinton also faced false accusations of a possible indictment against her.

on our review, we have not changed our conclusions that we expressed in July with respect to Secretary Clinton.” This letter, both unexpected and kairotic, renewed conversations about the FBI’s investigation at time when voters were days away from casting their ballots for the next President of the United States. The announcement was quickly covered by various media outlets, and in one *WSJ* article, “FBI Affirms No Clinton Charges --- After roiling campaign, the agency said new review didn't change its earlier position,” the author keeps the door open for further questions, alternatives to entertain. After appraising the Clinton campaign as in a state of turbulence of agitation (“roiling campaign”) they write:

Democrats weren't the only ones criticizing Mr. Comey. Sen. Charles Grassley (R., Iowa), chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, faulted what he called "another vague announcement" from the FBI, and demanded the agency say whether or not it was continuing to review the new emails.

Mr. Comey's letter didn't say whether the conduct of others close to Mrs. Clinton had remained under the agency's scrutiny.

The author first acknowledges that both Democrats and Republicans (specifically Sen. Charles Grassley) are criticizing Comey for “another vague announcement,” and express Grassley’s insistence that the FBI “say whether or not it was continuing the review the new emails.” At the time for Republicans, the lack of clarity in Comey’s announcement was undesired because they did not believe the emails could have been properly analyzed in such a short time period. That is, they presume Clinton’s wrongdoing, so when she is not charged they disagree with the process that cleared her. While including the voice of a Republican dissenter is not unusual (particularly for the *WSJ*), they remind readers that Comey’s letter “didn’t say whether the conduct of others

to Mrs. Clinton had remained under the agency's scrutiny," leaving room for readers to entertain the possibility that Clinton's campaign could still be proven of having committed a crime.

In addition to casting uncertainty on Comey's announcement, journalist also draw suspicion toward Clinton by negating frame about her propriety. That is, they reintroduce a "Clinton is not a criminal frame," which only further associates her with criminality right before the election. For instance, in an article in the *NYT* entitled "FBI Says Review Clears Clinton," the journalists writes:

Mr. Comey's announcement, just two days before the election, was an effort to clear the cloud of suspicion he had publicly placed over her presidential campaign late last month when he alerted Congress that the F.B.I. would examine the emails.

...The letter was a dramatic final twist in a tumultuous nine days for both Mrs. Clinton and Mr. Comey, who drew widespread criticism for announcing that the F.B.I. had discovered new emails that might be relevant to its investigation of Mrs. Clinton, which ended in July with no charges. That criticism of Mr. Comey from both parties is likely to persist after the election.

While the new letter was clear as it related to Mrs. Clinton, Mr. Comey's message was otherwise vague. He did not say that agents had completed their review of the emails, or that they were abandoning the matter in regard to her aides. But federal law enforcement officials said that they considered the review of emails related to Mrs. Clinton's server complete, and that Mr. Comey's letter was intended to convey that.

The timing of Comey's announcement is first presented as counter to what we would expect "just two days before," framing Comey's announcement once again as significant and his alleged "effort to clear the cloud of suspicion" as a fact. In other words, the monoglossic statement reminds readers that there is still suspicion surrounding her emails. Further, the amplification of "dramatic final twist in a tumultuous nine days" in the next paragraph draws further attention to this "twist" and negates a frame. To say that Clinton will not be charged reminds people that Clinton faced charges and likely leaves a negative impression of her. That is not to say we ought to criticize the reporting here, but the "Clinton is not a criminal" framing is not doing her any favors because she is still ultimately associated with criminality and suspicion right before the election. Finally, appraising the announcements as "vague" (a negative appraisal of appreciation) still may makes readers feel uncertain about Comey's decision not to charge Clinton. This is another instance where even though Clinton is not the subject of scrutiny ("While the new letter was clear as it related to Mrs. Clinton"), space is still left to entertain doubt about the conduct of Clinton's aides. Not only was his message "otherwise vague," Comey also "didn't say that agents had completed their review of the emails, or that they were abandoning the matter in regard to her aides." In other words, if you were reading this and were not favoring Clinton it might be relatively easy to continue associating Clinton with a seemingly never-ending investigation.

Conclusion

This final analysis chapter has accounted for three critical discourse moments including: 1) Comey's closing of the FBI investigation, 2) Wikileaks's publication of DNC emails and the Reopening of the FBI investigation (also known as the "October Surprise/Bombshell"), and 3) The November election. I have argued that while news coverage focused more explicitly on

Comey's intervention(s) in the investigation and political campaign, implicit judgments continue to be used to frame (or in the least have the effect of framing) Clinton as suspicious and ultimately incompetent as a presidential candidate. This chapter has documents these implications across time. In the end, Comey's efforts to clarify his findings Clinton come off more damning than if he had made a direct case against her. Had he formally charged her of a crime he would have needed visible evidence that she intended to violate the law. As it is, he can condemn her while saying he does not have enough evidence to convict. Rather than giving Clinton a chance to rebut legal charges he can possibly tarnish her by not charging her thus giving her no forum to respond. That said, I am not making the case that there is not a good reason for Comey to leave room for others to criticize Clinton; rather, I suggest that his entertaining of alternatives (what he can and cannot directly say about Clinton's behavior) can prove to be more damning to Clinton because she not have a direct charge to refute. The final chapter will discuss the implications of this case study more broadly, and point to directions for future work.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

In this dissertation I have explored moments in the ‘life’ of a single narrative over time, and the impact those moments have in shaping our beliefs about how public figures ought to behave. Specifically, my project is motivated by the following questions: What frames were used to portray Clinton, her past conduct with a private email server, and her current handling of questions about the affair? What did this framing imply about Clinton’s character and, particularly, her potential to manage the ethical responsibilities of the U.S. presidency? To do so I took a critical discourse analytic approach to tracing the circulation of discourse, issues of representation, and dynamics of social sanctioning. As a case to understand these issues, my project sought to understand how Hillary Clinton was appraised during news coverage of her private email server by analyzing a corpus of 510 articles from the *NYT* and *WSJ*. While reporters tend to accept Clinton’s veracity in their explicit reporting, they often make implicit claims that cast her actions in a suspicious light. In other words, they continue to frame her actions as unwarranted and questionable. As a result this project explored implications for how the press frame representations of public figures, in particular arguing how claims of fitness, veracity, and propriety are tied to presumptions about how women ought to behave in the public sphere. More to the point, this dissertation implies that because women are presumed to be unfit leaders, they are automatically seen as unfit in the public sphere. In short, this analysis suggests the manner in which media frame or create a composite of Clinton is done, not necessarily through its own singular voice (I.e. The voice of one journalist from the *NYT*), but rather by bringing together a host of voices and positions of Clinton that combine to forge her image. Specifically, this analysis suggests that those voices align to create a dominant view of Clinton, partly determine by the rhetorical artistry of journalists. In other words, the dominant view of

Clinton is a consequence of how journalists select, manage, and recontextualize voices and positions. In this chapter I discuss several implications of this case study and some possible ways these implications can be further explored by explaining the case study in future work.

Implication: Using DA and an Appraisal Framework

Methodologically, this dissertation has many implications for the affordances of using a discourse analytic approach on a corpus, as well as how Martin and White's appraisal framework can be successfully employed to research the power implicit judgments have in building negative character frames of public figures. Generally speaking, this project has taken a *discourse analytic* approach to analyze how frames are subtly constituted in discourse and accounts for the distinct characteristic of media discourse by applying the theory of intertextuality. To recall, intertextuality is the notion that all texts contain elements of other texts and cannot be made in isolation. Using an intertextual theory to examine the press' discourse draws focus to the exchanges between the voice of the author (journalist) and the other voices in the text. To unpack how Clinton was appraised through coverage of her private email use I employed the hand-coding methods put forward by linguists Martin and White (2005) in their book, *The Language of Evaluation*. Their appraisal framework helped me to interpret which behaviors and viewpoints regarding Clinton were socially sanctioned by the press and other voices attributed in the text. The attitudes expressed (I.e. emotional reactions, judgments of behavior, and evaluation of things) either implied positively or negatively what can serve as a threat or warning about someone's behavior. At stake in either explicit or implicit evaluations are the kinds of behavioral values that get legitimized through the discourse. Especially with judgment appraisals, journalists help establish values regarding how a person should behave—what is appropriate or

inappropriate. In considering what was at stake, a clear strength of this methodology has been in uncovering the subtle micro linguistic moves/turns taken in a text that may be unseen to the eye if using an otherwise broad rhetorical analytic lens.

Implication: Examining One Developing Narrative Over Time

In addition to methodological affordances, for those interested in understanding how character frames develop over time, this project has implications for why rhetoricians may consider taking a diachronic approach to examine one developing narrative over time. To be clear, I am not the first to use a diachronic analysis. As many DA scholars have noted, for those concerned with the general coverage of an issue and the wider social context, two time-related dimensions of analysis can be considered: *synchronic* and *diachronic* (Saussure 1983; Wodak et al., 1999; van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999; Carvalho 2009). A *synchronic approach* analyzes the representation of an issue *at a specific point in time* (typically at the time the text was written). A *diachronic approach*, on the other hand, considers the evolution and development of discourse *across time*, taking into account the “course of social matters and their wider political, social and economic context” (Carvalho 2009; Wodak et al., 1999; van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999). For this project, it was necessary to take a diachronic approach because I was interested in seeing how one narrative develops over time, as well as my commitment to taking an intertextual approach which requires analysts to consider the wider social and political context surrounding a case.

To recall, this dissertation has analyzed how Clinton was appraised during three time-sensitive phases:

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
First reports that Clinton used a private email account as Secretary of State	The FBI opens their investigation into Clinton private email	Clinton's presidential campaign ended

There are two reasons why taking a diachronic approach was helpful. First, because within each phase there were several smaller events which needed to be taken into context in order to understand the full picture of what was going on at the time. For instance, in Chapter 4 before analyzing news reports following Comey's announcement that Clinton would not be charged of any criminal wrongdoing, it was necessary to analyze Comey's actual statement. That is, analyze Comey's July 5th 2016 statement to press and television reporters at the FBI headquarters in Washington, DC. Doing so provided evidence for the kind of enthymemes that were built to make implied negative judgments against Clinton's fitness, veracity, and propriety.¹⁸ In addition, there were moments when it was important to address other events not directly related to Clinton's email investigation but that kept Clinton in the public eye during the course of the nine month narrative. For example, in Chapter 3 I briefly discussed Clinton's 11-hour public testimony before Congress regarding her involvement in the 2012 attack against two government facilities in Benghazi, Libya that led to the death of two American officials. Doing so was necessary to fully account for the "life" of not only newspaper reports from the *NYT* and *WSJ*, but also the email issue at large.

Second, a diachronic approach helped reveal the extent to which previous appraisals of Clinton helped set the stage for appraisals in later phases. Had I simply analyzed each event independently and decontextualized from the entire narrative I may not have been able to explain

¹⁸ In Chapter 4 readers may also recall my discussion of the DNC and the "October Surprise."

just how journalists worked to build negative judgments about Clinton's behavior — particularly how her fitness, veracity, and propriety was discredited. Further, while there is no definitive evidence of how the use of enthymemes in Phase 1 and 2 influenced the public's perception of Clinton's fitness to be President in Phase 3, the *prima facie* evidence is strongly suggestive. That is, the seeding of unrefuted suspicious inferences about Clinton's email behavior over a two year period may very well have paved the way toward their adopting more explicitly negative conclusions about her character without much direction from reporters.

Implication: How the Media Frames Clinton Through Selection, Management, and Recontextualization

Just as this dissertation has traced the development of a narrative over time, this project also has implications for the role mainstream media discourse plays in the framing of public figures. Previous research by rhetorical scholars has asked how the media frames images political leaders and what those frames represent about American politics (Anderson 2002, 2017; Carlin & Winfrey 2009; Kaufer et al 2012; Kohrs Campbell 1998; Parry-Giles 1996, 2000; Parry-Giles & Blair 2000; Shepard 2009). Building from this work, this dissertation has sought to advance our understanding of how public perception can be *mediated through intertextual frames* presenting actions and character traits of those public figures. In particular, my work has implications for how this mediation functions through the careful selection, management, and recontextualization of discourse produced and circulated by journalists. An author's selectiveness can reveal the kinds of assumptions on which the journalist (and perhaps whom he/she acknowledges) operate. My work has shown the subtly in how character frames are orchestrated, not just by a single journalists' voice, but by a multitude of voices and positions on Clinton

(include her own) that combine to create a composite image of her. The extent to which the voices brought together create a dominant view of Clinton or whether they diverge to create contrasting images of her is partly determined by the rhetorical finesse of journalists— a consequence of how journalists select, manage, and recontextualize voices and positions. Ultimately, their voice management, so to speak, is likely a key to the image-making, and something an intertextual perspective helps me discover.

All that said, it is important to note I am not making the case that Clinton was completely free of criticism; in fact, as I noted in the previous chapter, Clinton does seem to have misled the public about her emails. Specifically, Clinton’s attempt to evade the FOIA by using a private email server (which is in the public interest) and misrepresentation of how she handled classified information (particularly when it could be argued that less powerful individuals would have been punished for similar behavior) has warranted legitimate criticism. I would be remiss if I did not note the ways in which Clinton warranted criticism; thus, it is my belief that many are justified in arguing that the press’ negative appraisals of Clinton are at times legitimate¹⁹. However, my analysis addresses the press’ role in unnecessarily inflating the email issue - most notably in keeping the issue alive (that is, salient to the public) and in often dramatically framing the impact of Clinton’s private server use.²⁰

As we lead into a new election season, the stakes remain high: political news coverage, particularly of female figures, ought to be critically examined. My dissertation serves as a necessary reminder of that fact, by uncovering how micro-discursive features of the news can

¹⁹ It could be argued that these negative appraisals are warranted after Clinton repeatedly made claims that did not withstand criticism; for instance, that she “never received nor sent any material that was marked classified” (PolitiFact).

²⁰ Here I think especially of the press’ framing of the “October Surprise” and “Comey Bombshell” discussed in Chapter 4.

shape not only beliefs about specific female candidates but normative ideas about how women ought to conduct themselves in the public sphere.

Future Work

While this dissertation has significance for research involving rhetorical methodology, news narratives, and the framing of public figures, there are limitations. One such limitation is in the project's limited focus on the gendered nature of what it means to be "fit" for leadership roles. Future projects ought to contend more explicitly with the often presupposed claim that women are untrustworthy and incompetent—that women are always at risk of being tied to the perception that their minds are inferior. As Parry Giles reminds us in her 2014 monograph, *Hillary Clinton in the News*,

“Women arguably face added layers of authenticity challenges because of the conscious and unconscious assumption that politics persists as a masculine profession taking place in decidedly masculine spaces. Before being taken seriously as a political candidate or a legislative leader, a woman must first overcome a sense of imposter status in her news biography, persistently struggling to prove herself as a strong woman and a credible political leader in ways that often contradict the long-held expectations of authentic womanhood” (181).

Of course, the added challenges women often face when occupying public roles is nothing new; there is a clear history of scrutiny against women whose lives are made public by the nature of their profession: from disliking politicians who do not perform their culturally defined feminist role publicly (Kohrs Campbell 1998) to disregarding women's competence in political affairs (Harp et al. 2016; Anderson 2017). As Karrin Vasby Anderson has argued, ...”female “first-

timers” historically have been viewed as pioneers with symbolic appeal rather than political strength. To be taken seriously as presidential candidates, women politicians must amass significant political experience, party support, and campaign funds. Once they do that, their political strength is portrayed as antidemocratic entitlement and their presidential aspirations as a manic desire for power. Analysis of this rhetorical dynamic reveals the constraints with which future female presidential candidates—both first-timers and frontrunners—will have to contend” (534). Drawing on Kathleen Hall Jamieson’s “double bind,” Anderson argues that female presidential candidates — particularly Clinton in 2008 and more recently in 2015-2016 faced the “first-time/frontrunner double bind. According to Jamieson (1995), the “double bind” is a rhetorical construct that “posits two and only two alternatives, one or both penalizing the person being offered them” (17). For political candidates in particular, “Women who are considered feminine will be judged incompetent, and women who are competent, unfeminine...who succeed in politics and public life will be scrutinized under a different lens from that applied to successful men” (Jamieson 16). Though the questions guiding my dissertation project do not explicitly deal with Jamieson’s double bind, extensions of this project ought to be made to further question ways in which Clinton may or may not continue to face this bind.

Given the material constraints of a dissertation project, future work may also more closely analyze some of the events that took place during the nine month news narrative, as well as to broaden the timeline of the corpus to beyond the 2016 election cycle. In addressing the former, for instance, I have briefly argued in Chapter 3 how the press used “ritualistic public punishment” to frame her private email use and subsequent apology, and ultimately build negative character judgments against Clinton through invited inferences in the discourse. Clinton’s interview with David Muir and subsequent coverage provides just one rich case study

for better understanding the function of ritualistic public apologies in determining norms of society at a given time (Villadsen 2008). To continue this research one might also examine how Clinton's apology was accepted as a form of (in)hospitality by the press, and exploring notions of publicity in how the press use invited inferences to circulate standards for how political candidates ought to behave.

Moreover, while this project was primarily concerned with the discourse produced by journalists, future work may attend more closely to the discourse produced by other actors, such as authoritative figures. For example, scholars may find interest in more closely tracking how Comey's discourse was circulated and taken up in the news - especially in how he responded to criticism over the timing of the FBI's investigation, release of investigation findings, and the findings themselves. His active and controversial involvement in the private email issue may raise additional questions about the power and impact of discourse produced by those in authoritative positions.

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