

May 2016

An Examination of Sagebrush Rebellion Communications Using Narrative Policy Framework

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.34917/9112158>

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AN EXAMINATION OF SAGEBRUSH REBELLION COMMUNICATIONS
USING NARRATIVE POLICY FRAMEWORK

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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School of Environmental and Public Affairs
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May 2016

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Dissertation Approval

The Graduate College
The University of Nevada, Las Vegas

April 5, 2016

This dissertation prepared by

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entitled

An Examination of Sagebrush Rebellion Communications Using Narrative Policy
Framework

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

Despite being rich in resources, a growing population and open spaces, the Old West has often erupted into the “Angry West” (Lamm, R. D., & McCarthy, M. 1982), as individuals, interest groups and political leaders throughout the West have demanded the turnover of select lands within the region for local control, development and/or private sale. One of the most well-known and heated public lands debates took place during the late 1970s and was called the Sagebrush Rebellion. Rebellion leaders gained national attention as they emphasized the need for autonomy, resource development and equality with Eastern states through the turnover of public lands.

Utilizing qualitative analysis and the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF), this research is an analysis of 588 formal and informal communications from Sagebrush Rebels and members of the opposition party, characterized as Environmentalists. Methodology consisted of using a grounded theoretical approach to uncover emergent themes and the Narrative Policy Framework for specific narrative elements and strategies. Emerging themes included the appearance of the devil/angel shift, a high use of economic data for justifications for both parties, the use of blame and the identification of policy winners and losers.

Keywords: Sagebrush Rebellion, Narrative Policy Framework, Land Transfer Debate

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Gene Hall, for the patient guidance and mentorship he provided to me during the course of my PhD student career. From one city mouse to another, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Dr. Anna Lukemeyer also pushed me to get started and believed in me, and my research, something I will forever remember and sincerely appreciate. I hope to do you justice with my future career.

I'd also like to thank the other members of my committee Dr. Karen Danielsen and Dr. Andy Kirk for their guidance, thought-provoking suggestions, and the general collegiality that each of them offered over the course of my research. In a similar vein, I'd like to recognize Dr. Jessica Word for her contributions to my intellectual and professional growth over these past few years.

And finally, a few words in recognition of the love and support I have received from my parents and sister in support of my educational goals. Thank you, I love you.

Dedication

In loving memory of my grandmother, Elma Moore and my great aunt, Linda Senter.

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List of Definitions

100th meridian – A geographical marker often used in writing and research about the West.

“The hundredth meridian distinguishes between the west and the east, and is both a geographical and a cultural boundary” (Cawley, R.M, 2003). This terminology was initially used by John Wesley Powell in his “Report on the Arid Region of the United States” (1879), in reference to the territory west of the hundredth meridian which was typified by aridity and the need for intensive irrigation to make the region agriculturally productive.

Commodity users (or development interests) – In the context of this research, the term has been well defined by Cawley, who wrote about the Sagebrush Rebellion. Per Cawley “these terms apply to groups and individuals primarily interested in the economic development of public land resources” (1993, pg. 13).

Environmentalists: Typically, those who stand in opposition to public land disposal are assembled under the broader term of environmentalists or some derivation of the word. Again, per Cawley, while there are various parties in opposition to the spirit of the pro-land disposal debate, “these interests typically agree on the need to emphasize protection of environmental values over economic development” (1993, pg. 14).

Federal agencies – For the scope of this paper the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS), National Forest Service (NFS), National Fish and Wildlife Service (NFWS), and the various other federally designated national agencies with express stewardship of the public lands will all be discussed under the umbrella of the term “federal agency.” The various arguments for and against the land policy of a particular agency is beyond the scope of this paper. I am concerned with overall political and historical narratives and policy regarding public lands.

Interest groups - as defined in “The Intersection of Narrative Policy Analysis and Policy Change Theory”, “interest groups attempt to maintain, demonstrate, and increase their political power as they seek to win a favorable policy” (McBeth, M. K., Shanahan, E. A., Arnell, R. J., & Hathaway, P. L., 2007, pg. 89).

Multiple use – The term “multiple use” is defined under the Federal Public Land Management Act. It is defined as the:

“management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people; making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; the use of some land for less than all of the resources; a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific and historical values; and harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment with consideration being given to the relative values of the resources and not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output” (FPLMA, 1976).

Public land –For the purposes of this paper terms such as federal lands, the federal estate, the public domain and public lands are used interchangeably. This term will be utilized primarily as it was in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), where public lands were defined as, “any land and interest in land owned by the United States within the several States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquired ownership” (except for lands on the Outer Continental Shelf and lands held for the benefits of Indians, Aleuts and Eskimos) (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2001).

Western states -The states of primary concern are designated by the U.S. Census Bureau as being located within Region 4: West, Division 8: Mountain (Census Regions and Divisions of the United States. (n.d.). The eleven coterminous Western states included within this geographic designation are; Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. Note that Alaska and Hawaii (65% and 15% public land respectively) (Pomerico, 2013)) are not included within the focus of this paper, even though they both hold significant public land holdings and are also the subject of their own host of land transfer debates.

Chapter 1: Introduction

As of 2012, the U.S. Government owned approximately 635-640 million acres, or approximately 28% of the land base of the United States. Western states hold the bulk of those public lands, a full 96% of the public estate as compared to the 4% held by states east of the 100th meridian (Gorte, Vincent, et al., 2012). The causes for this difference in federal land ownership are deeply rooted in historical events, geography, enabling language in new state constitutions, settlement patterns, resource availability and politicking. Regardless of the causes for the high levels of public lands in the West, control over these lands has remained hotly contested, with Western state representatives and industry continuously demanding the turnover of public lands to state control. These sporadic arguments (communications), are typically relayed by both traditional (press releases, newsletters, editorials) and non-traditional (the Grass March, the Bucket Brigade, the recent Oregon federal building occupation, etc.), means.

The debate over the value and disposition of public lands has existed since before the beginning of the nation. Historically, the majority of states east of the Rocky Mountains lobbied to have public lands within their borders transferred to state or private ownership while states west of the Rockies have been largely unsuccessful in the same endeavor. Federal lands have had several modes of ownership, reflecting different goals such as resource exploitation, homesteading, and environmental conservation. Each of these goals has required different policies and the cooperation of different interest groups. Public lands, their ownership and use, have been affected by the passage of land policy acts like the Taylor Grazing Act, Federal Land Management Policy Act, and various environmental laws meant to protect and preserve sometimes fragile ecosystems from development and overuse. Though far-reaching in nature, these Acts and various other tools of legal activism haven't been met with unmitigated support.

Demands for change in the West, as highlighted by the rise and fall of the Sagebrush Rebellion (1979-1981) and ongoing privatization movements, represent serious attempts to obtain title to public lands from the federal government. Groups and individuals involved in the original Sagebrush Rebellion are defined as, “Rebels”. These Rebels found that though their policy issue received attention in various national magazines, regional and local newspapers, and a presidential agenda, their issue ultimately fizzled after much public debate and discourse without resolution. However, despite the failure of the Sagebrush Rebellion, the issue remains intractable and has failed to create large scale, substantive policy change in spite of repeated bill requests, grassroots events, and educational campaigns.

The public land debate is complex, with private and public property rights and an American conservation ethic all situated within changing local, state, and federal context. While research has been completed on the political and ideological dimensions of the Rebellion, an examination of how the different groups (Rebels and Environmentalists) created narratives for the public in order to rally them to their cause and ultimately attempted to change policy has not yet occurred. Addressing the intractability and reemergence of this situation requires in-depth analysis of historical precedence, legal theory, and economic drivers to understand how and why these lands are held under federal purview and how various interest groups seek to change or maintain the status quo. The West was chosen as the primary focal point for this research because of the region’s high percentage of public lands and because the states within this region are typically the nexus for conventional or unconventional activist efforts to retain or transfer public lands. Basically, this research goes where the arguments are the most heated, where the bulk of the federal estate lays.

Statement of the Problem

Public land policy and ownership is a continuously divisive policy issue, particularly in the American West. The issue dates to before the settlement of the United States and is currently a hot button issue in the domestic and international press. Various groups, with their voices given equal credence due to multiple use mandates, are unable to find common cause and create actual change that is positive in nature and that accommodates their diverse interests.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine archival documents to determine the role group narratives played in the development of public land group policy beliefs and coalition support during the Sagebrush Rebellion.

Conceptual Framework

Qualitative content analysis was used to code and empirically analyze (using the NPF) narratives created during the initial Sagebrush Rebellion. Using narratives from pro and anti-transfer coalitions from the period of time surrounding the Sagebrush Rebellion as the unit of analysis, I collected and coded 588 narratives found within the UNR Special Collections Department, sources such as internet blogs and articles, newspaper editorials and articles and congressional hearing testimony.

The intent of this research is to utilize a grounded theoretical approach and the conceptual framework of Narrative Policy Framework (NPF). In this research I pay special attention to the intractability of the public land transfer debate and assess whether groups use common narrative elements in an attempt to gain support from the public for their public lands agenda. Of added significance to this study is the use of archival (specifically, pre-internet) communications as the primary source for analysis using the NPF.

Outline of this study

The next section, Chapter 2, is an overview of the literature as it relates to United States land disposal and retention policies, the interest groups involved, and their competing narratives. While discussing historical land policy, these topics also include references to issues of state sovereignty, the public good, and an evolution of the American view of land and resources held in trust by the American government. A brief summary of environmental literature focusing on the Western Intermountain region is also valuable in order to see the primary opposing view point and to put coalition communications into a larger societal context. Chapter two also holds the literature review, an overview of qualitative methods of inquiry and the narrative policy framework (NPF), the theoretical framework utilized in this study.

The methodology section in Chapter 3 covers the when, where and how of the study, including the rationale for the research design. The separate Results (Chapter 4) and Conclusions Chapters (Chapter 5), are where I provide an overview of the analysis, implications for policy action, an overall overview of this particular research project, as well as recommendations for future study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In order to discuss the current state of American land policy, it is essential to have a thorough understanding of how land policy has historically shaped patterns of settlement, social policy and intergovernmental relations. American land policies have typically fallen with three separate, but at times overlapping, categories; acquisition, disposal and retention. Initially, the lands that comprise the federal estate were once seen as a means to reward veterans of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, as a source of unprecedented riches open to the common man, and as a place of dreams for many. In later years, in an effort to fill the wide open spaces of this vast, new continent, the US Government would dispose of public lands to eager settlers. This policy soon changed as the US and an environmentally conscious public pushed for permanent retention of the public domain for preservation purposes. In the recent past, however, these lands have become a source of friction for various stakeholders, some of whom believe that extractive, economically oriented uses of land should trump those who value the aesthetic, recreational and/or intrinsic aspects of the land. A brief overview of American public lands follows and is intended to put narratives and public land policy into context.

Pre-Revolutionary War to the 20th century

The question of the proper management of public lands has existed longer than the fifty states as we now know them. The U.S. Government initially set vague and often conflicting land policy for the new nation. In line with many facets of life during the colonial period, British ideas on land use, ownership and tenure acted as guides for our nation's early experience (Clawson, 1968) regardless of their realistic applicability to local conditions. Lands east of the Mississippi were already in colonial possession at the end of the Revolutionary War, and those

newly formed states turned over the western territories they owned to the federal government, essentially starting the creation of the public domain (Clawson and Held, 1957).

Encouraging Western movement in fulfillment of the national idea of Manifest Destiny required American lands to be obtained through a patchwork of conquest, treaties, sale or co-option, with the American government acting as the primary agent of exchange for most of those lands. Initially, land, labor and capital, the three primary ingredients needed for settlement, were not in normal proportion in this new country. Land wasn't considered a scarce resource by any means and in fact, "people were the scarce resource" (Clawson, 1968, pg. 4). One of the first pieces of legislation for the new country was the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 which set the standard for US land policy. It provided that new states would be created out of the previously mentioned state ceded lands and just as importantly, that new states would be created and admitted with equal political standing, meaning two Senators and population based House Members. This was directly aimed at ensuring states small, large, old, or new were looked at as equals before the eyes of the newly formed government.

Large scale land policy was eventually recognized and mentioned within the Constitution. In Article IV, Section III, of the U.S. Constitution (1787), Congress was given the "power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory and the other property belonging to the United States." This included the restriction that states joining the Union would not be given title to unclaimed lands within their borders and the land would remain under the direction of the federal government.

Land acquisitions were necessary in order to match the ambitions of the American government and the American people. At that time however, these lands weren't simply there for free settlement. Instead, Western land may have been inhabited by Native Americans, under

the control of the Mexican government, or like the Republic of Texas, were new countries unto themselves who eventually joined the Union. One of the first major land acquisitions (after the initial 13 colony settlement and Revolutionary War) was that of the Louisiana Purchase, which brought in about 500 million acres in 1803, in effect doubling the size of this young nation (Clawson & Held, 1957). The Gadsden Purchase of 1853 was the last purchase of contiguous lands within the U.S. This single purchase brought in 19 million acres from Mexico, and gave us most of present day Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico and California.

While the West was seen as an unknown place, it held the allure of riches and a new start for those willing to claim it. A string of resource discoveries such as the discovery of gold in California in 1849 sparked the rush to, and ultimately the settlement of the West, as we know it today. Population growth throughout the Western territories was both a blessing and a curse to the new government. An initial barrier to land settlement had been the lack of “American” people, or immigrants who fulfilled a new American ideology (or perhaps myth, would be a better description). Men and women were needed who could brave the elements, the hostile Indian tribes and the risk of financial ruin, all in the pursuit of good land that would enable them to raise their families and make some money along the way. In order to accommodate this growth, a vast system of free land and infrastructure including railroads, accessible water, protection from Indian tribes and communication tools were needed in order to accommodate Eastern investors and those brave souls who went west.

During this initial rush west during the nineteenth century, disposal was the primary land policy of the government. For the fledgling republic, specific institutional arrangements were created that facilitated the transfer of the public domain into settlers’ hands, sometimes in return for payment or quite frequently not. American government representatives had the foresight to

ensure that not all of the land and resources were locked up by a few powerful people as is frequently found throughout history on an international scale. The U.S. Government, in pursuit of Thomas Jefferson's utopic ideal of a large scale settlement of yeomen farmers, in effect created policies to avoid a new world system of serfdom, claiming land for the common people (Clawson, 1968).

Preemption was one means by which American settlers and businessmen claimed lands and these arrangements were notoriously abused. Miners and prospectors heading west would often settle lands that were in contested territory and though consistent conflicts would arise with Mexican and Indian settlers who had long preceded this new wave of settlers, American settlement continued as both covert and overt American policy. The U.S. was unable to stop the flood of settlers, so instead they co-opted them by creating the 1862 Homestead Act. In exchange for 160 acre allotments, this Act authorized unrestricted settlement on public lands to settlers. Residence, cultivation, and proof of monetary investments were the main requirements for settlement. These requirements were not difficult to meet or cheat and were in truth largely unregulated due to vast distances between the government offices in the East and the actual Western lands.

Upon finding these "unsettled" lands, Westerners were required to create their own system of justice and policies that were appropriate to the often harsh conditions that those in the Eastern states were unfamiliar with. Westerners became heavily involved in legal and political processes related to land ownership and maintenance, either because they were homesteading on the land with or without permission, exploiting resources, or filled with a general wanderlust. In the end while local and federal policies were quickly changing and often favored growth, these

new westerners tended to side with whichever policy was most likely to offer the most attractive access to land and resources.

Western land settlement patterns were much different than those found on the East coast and the Midwest due largely to differences in geography. While trappers and miners would move through, using the land briefly (or setting up typically small scale mining operations), ranchers found they needed vast amounts of land in order to support fewer cattle than their counterparts in the East. Private cattle ranchers, the iconic settlers of the West, weren't able to purchase vast amounts of land due to the provisions of the Homestead Act (1862), and cattle had to be moved to different forage areas throughout the year. As a result, ranchers typically owned a small parcel of land, preferably close to timber and water, and utilized the unpopulated public lands adjacent to their private property. Livestock interests and settlers who initially may have found themselves bound by few restrictions other than drought, pests and other settlers, soon enough found themselves under the federal purview, regulated by the creation of the National Forest Service (NFS) in 1905. The NFS was initially in charge of creating a system of grazing allotments and collecting grazing fees, though pre-existing private uses had already been established (Clawson, 1983) and respected.

As a result of settlement patterns becoming more stable and the national consciousness shifting toward conservation (versus unregulated resource development), in 1872 President Theodore Roosevelt, with the aid of conservation minded activists and Congress, created Yellowstone National Park; our first federally designated National Park. Scholars highlight the private self-interest underlying this public/private partnership between the federal government and the railroad companies, or the "eastern establishment" (Clawson, 1983, p 28) that created a tourist system heavily reliant on the railroads. Regardless of the sincerity of their conservation

rhetoric, private developers were partly responsible for the National Park System as we know it today and for the movement towards saving pristine lands from wanton degradation from timber and other extractive industries. These initial designations of public land, regulated by the government, forever changed the American social, biological and recreational experiences.

Even though initially there was no formal arrangement for the continued management of these federal lands, massive withdrawals of the public domain for conservation purposes occurred in the coming years as Roosevelt became more involved with both Gifford Pinchot, a leader advocating for the active use of public lands, and John Muir, a leading conservationist (Clawson, 1986, p 29). Pinchot's motto was,

“The first duty of the human race on the material side is to control the use of the earth and all that therein is. Conservation means the wise use of the earth and its resources for the lasting good of men. Conservation is the foresighted utilization, preservation, and/or renewal of forests, waters, lands, and minerals, for the greatest good of the greatest number for the longest time” (Gifford Pinchot as quoted in Hardi & Scott's 1994 article).

The world of those who had relied heavily on resource exploitative industry was being turned upside down as Pinchotism, or the greatest good for the greatest number ethos, gave way to John Muir's conservation ethic (i.e. preservation of pristine lands) as a primary motivator for environmental policy changes.

Land policy in the 20th century

Even with an increasingly conservation minded public, eventually federal lands started to become smaller in size, and resource exploitation was reaching unmanageable levels with devastating consequences for local communities. Consequently, the U.S. public started to mobilize in support of retention and permanent management of public lands. One observer noted that the tragedy of the commons was becoming all too common, and “that which was free for all to use, came to be regarded as free for all to despoil” (Rowley, 2000, p 99, Thornber, 1910). In addition to a growing awareness of the dangers of unmitigated resource use, American citizens

were demanding better access to outdoor recreation opportunities. Historian Donald Worster considered this part of our national history as reflecting two simultaneous revolutions: that of the “inventing of the American commons” and the “ecologizing of both public and private land use in the US” (Robbins, 2000, p 14).

After World War I, even though “conservationist-liberal doctrine held that remaining public lands should remain in federal ownership” (Clawson, 1983, pg. 9), President Hoover created a commission to look at management of the public lands. As a result of the committee’s recommendations, Hoover offered what Rowley calls “an empty gift” (Rowley, 2000, pg. 106) of the public domain to the states. The States considered this an empty gift though because even though they were offered the land within their borders the Hoover commission’s “gift” would have left subsurface mineral rights to the federal government. The States outright rejected this proposal and shortly thereafter political ideology started to change within the White House. These events led to the Taylor Grazing Act, which would eventually change the nature of public land policy forever.

The 1934 Taylor Grazing Act, an early piece of environmentally minded legislation, passed during the Franklin D. Roosevelt presidency. This Act was aimed at curbing the tragedy of the commons: the extensive misuse of the natural resources that had existed up to the time throughout the nation. The Act ended the policy of wholesale disposal of public lands and required the sound management of public resources. One piece of the Act that held enormous consequences for the West was the moving of grazing related issues from the NFS to a different department, the Grazing Service, which eventually merged with the General Land Office, before officially becoming the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in 1946. The purpose of these agencies was to manage large tracts of lands typically used for ranching or other exploitative

uses. The Act had a bigger impact on the Western states than on states east of the 100th meridian simply because the Western states had larger amounts of federal lands with politically active community members.

The Act stipulated that unreserved and unappropriated lands were closed to both homesteading and the unregulated exploitation that had guided land policy up until this era. The Act put approximately 80 million acres of good grazing and forage land into grazing districts (BLM Casper Field Office, 2011) and required ranchers to pay fees to graze their cattle, fees that have set the stage for disagreements over the nature of private rights on public lands. These rights were typically based on prior first-in-time, first-in-right principles that had guided grazing rights in the past. This completely revolutionized the use of public land for private use as well as the notion of private rights on public lands. Despite the heavy focus on regulation of ranching practices, there still remained various opportunities for the use of the public: staking mining claims, public hunting, fishing, camping, and other types of outdoor recreation.

Ranching wasn't the only for-profit industry to be redefined through 20th century legislation. Mineral, timber and other industry leaders also found themselves with different regulations, some of which limited their ability to exploit resources, while others increased their abilities to profit off of public lands. In 1946, petroleum exploitation on public lands was put under the purview of the Department of the Interior (DOI, which also houses the BLM). In 1920 the government passed the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands which allowed private companies to bid on, lease and develop mineral resources on public lands. Though the timber industry had long exploited timber on national lands in partnership with the National Forest Service under the multiple-use mandate from the Pinchot years, in 1947 the Materials Act legally gave the BLM the means to dispose of timber on their lands (meaning NFS doesn't harvest BLM

lands and vice versa). All of these Acts proved to be simultaneously welcomed and hated by existing and new users.

The Environmental Movement

The 1960s and 1970s saw a burst of environmental policies and laws that changed the management of public lands for this nation even further. In 1964, the Land and Water Conservation Fund was the first of many environmentally friendly Acts passed during the next two decades. This Act allows the federal government to “use revenues from the depletion of one natural resource - offshore oil and gas - to support the conservation of another precious resource - our land and water” (Land and Water Conservation Fund, 2014). Two specific bills further impacted industry and conservation efforts on a national level: the 1965 Water Quality Act which established water quality standards and the 1970 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a far reaching set of regulations that made protection of the environment a national priority. NEPA is still salient in modern times, if not more so, as each new commercial development requires industry developers and/or federal agencies to report on how their activities will affect the environment via an impact statement. NEPA also furthered the cause of the public concern by mandating the inclusion of public comment throughout the early evaluation stage of the project (before the project begins).

In addition, timely publications such as Aldo Leopold’s *A Sand County Almanac* and Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* mobilized people to consider environmental issues in a way that the U.S. had never seen before and created a narrative appreciated by a national audience. The environmental movement took the nation by storm; initially environmentalists focused on dirty industries like oil, mineral extraction, and particularly the agriculture sector where pesticide use was rampant. In addition to demanding recompense for public land misuse, environmentalists

started to demand environmentally protective (and sometimes restorative) action on private lands (Bromley, 2000, p 23). With private land ownership being a sacred and personal right in the view of many Americans, particularly those in the West, this new movement resulted in anger on both sides.

This anger didn't stop environmentalist though, who saw their cause on behalf of the environment as equally important as the interests of commodity and/or local users. As such, they employed various means to protect their interests on both public and private lands. The courts played an important role in the resulting policy controversies, creating an environment characterized as activist or "adversarial legalism" (Kagan 2004). As an example, "since 1970, virtually every reform in public lands forest management has been sparked by citizens' suits holding the Forest Service to its statutory obligations" (Wilkinson, 1992, p 147). Over the course of the past few decades, land trusts and conservation trusts, tools by which lands or individual property rights are purchased and managed with ecosystem management in mind, also became common tools of the environmental movement.¹

Larger in scope than the Taylor Grazing Act, the 1976 Federal Land Policy & Management Act (FLPMA) was enacted by Congress as a result of significant lobbying by environmental groups and members of the public with concerns over generational legacies. This Act significantly altered public land management by clarifying the role of and laws governing

¹ Leading scholars in the study of public lands and land conservation, question this "acquire, dispose, retain triptych" regarding public lands (Fairfax et al, 2005, p 255). Those desiring more information should consult "Fairfax, S. K. (2005). *Buying nature: The limits of land acquisition as a conservation strategy, 1780-2004*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT.

the BLM which still often finds itself with multiple, often conflicting prescribed roles. The very first section of the Act “was congressional declaration requiring that “the public lands be retained in federal ownership” (Wilkinson, 1992, p 98). Recognizing the expanded role of public lands beyond that of ranching interests, the Act put the public range under multiple use management (as defined previously), mandating that wildlife, environmental, and recreational interests are included in the planning and management of the lands. Multiple use management has since become the primary means by which public lands are viewed, managed and policed. Multiple use also means that the opinions of those who may never have the opportunity to see or use those public lands are given as much credence as those who live adjacent to said lands.

The Sagebrush Rebellion

Brought on by the language and policies of the Federal Public Land Management Act (FPLMA), the Sagebrush Rebellion² was a movement by Western private and local government actors to “put large parts of the federal holdings – the public lands of the West- into the hands of the states, localities, individuals and corporations” (Popper, 1984, pg.61). While the federal government may have seen FPLMA as a means to set land policy on a clear trajectory to retention, preservation and orderly development, it had the side effect of mobilizing typically rural conservatives (Popper, 1984) who saw their livelihoods threatened by an overreaching federal government. Among other things, over the years these interests lobbied against the portion of the Act that claimed ranchers had no “vested rights in the lands on which their stock

² Some historians are apt to label separate revolts throughout the 19th and 20th centuries as being “Sagebrush Rebellions”, though for the purposes of this research paper, I refer only to the Sagebrush Rebellion of the late 1970s, early 1980s.

grazed” (Wilkinson, 1992, p 98). This statement, in the view of these interests, negated the often expensive and time intensive processes that are part of a regular ranching operation such as the maintenance of fences, riparian zones and other basic infrastructure. Ranchers, who knew how the land had traditionally responded to external pressures like drought and wildfires, asserted that they were better able to manage the lands. Under the Act, however, ranchers asserted that, while they were required to invest money and resources into public lands they were working on, they ultimately had no rights to that labor, to improved bio-diversity or to the infrastructure they themselves invested in the property. These insecure property rights were seen as a fatal flaw of the system by Rebels and those who supported their cause. These interests were further mobilized when the BLM started to enforce the FPLMA by pushing for stock reductions on federal lands and attempted to adhere to multiple use mandates.

This “environmental oppositional movement” (Jacques, Dunlap & Freeman, 2008, pg. 354) was largely grassroots, without formal membership or organization, though it “appears to have been an authentic political movement, deriving support from a diverse group of people who believed that federal land management policies had become overly responsive to environmental preservation values” (Cawley, 1993, p 14). Sagebrush Rebels came primarily from rural Western communities and were typically residents involved in extractive and/or ranching industries. This vocal group demanded the turnover of public lands first for sale to private owners (particularly those vested, locally based ranchers), then later as the movement evolved and political realities set in, this group then sought the transfer of these lands to the state. The groups gained widespread support at the State, County and local levels of government throughout the Intermountain region and through sustained resolutions, campaigning and other measures, the Rebels gained the attention of Congress, the President and the nation.

The Rebels embraced different justifications for their cause, such as the Constitution. As a means to counteract environmentally mandated revenue loss, the Rebels emphasized the takings clause of the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution. The takings clause requires private property owners to be compensated if their land is actually taken (eminent domain) or if some outside demand (be it the government, environmentalists, etc.) deprives them of the full value of their private property. This argument gained widespread attention due to the 20-year legal battle of a Nevada Rancher named Wayne Hage (1936-2006), perhaps one of the most vocal advocates for preservation of private rights on public lands. Hage brought suit against the Federal government and won as the judge ruled that the U.S. Forest Service deprived Hage of his water rights (which were purchased with the ranch) by building fences around streams, cutting his cattle off from needed drinking water in the Toiyabe National Forest in Nevada (Perkowski, 2012). However, this decision was later reversed by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit and has left the question of private property rights on public lands still open and contentiously debated by those who seek to economically exploit public lands.

The Hage lawsuit and various other communications show the ideological divide between those who believe they hold legitimate private property rights on public lands and those who believe that private property right owners are stewards of the land, of a public good, who must keep the larger public welfare in mind and not just their own self-interest. Grazing permits, water rights, and land improvements are all expenditures that a private business pays for, separate and outside of government oversight. They are in effect person-to-person business transactions, some are subject to IRS taxes, and these business interests want to be compensated if outside demands force them to lose income (Hage, 1998).

An additional constitutionally-based argument is that of language found within the enabling acts of state constitutions. For example, in October of 1864, President Lincoln proclaimed that the State of Nevada was admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original states, despite its small and transient population. While the Civil War and other reasons may have been responsible for rushing the formation of Nevada, its Constitution holds specific language related to the treatment of Western lands that were in the public domain. As Nevada and most Western states were brought into the Union, most had enabling language similar to that of Nevada's constitutional provision which states (emphasis added):

“ the people inhabiting said territory do agree and declare, that *they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated public lands lying within said territory, and that the same shall be and remain at the sole and entire disposition of the United States*; and that lands belonging to citizens of the United States, residing without the said state, shall never be taxed higher than the land belonging to the residents thereof; and that no taxes shall be imposed by said state on lands or property therein belonging to, or which may hereafter be purchased by, the United States, unless otherwise provided by the congress of the United States” (Nevada State Constitution 1864, 2014).

Utah State's Constitution has enabling language in Act III that stands out even more so in the minds of land retention and transfer advocates (emphasis added):

Right to public domain disclaimed. Taxation of lands. Exemptions. Second:--The people inhabiting this State do affirm and declare *that they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated public lands lying within the boundaries hereof, and to all lands lying within said limits owned or held by any Indian or Indian tribes, and that until the title thereto shall have been extinguished by the United States, the same shall be and remain subject to the disposition of the United States*, and said Indian lands shall remain under the absolute jurisdiction and control of the Congress of the United States.

It may appear that these constitutional provisions actually defeat the purposes of the Rebels, but transfer advocates argue that the opposite is true. Referencing the federal acts authorizing their creation, Rebels contend that all newly created states, east or west, received a promise from the Federal government to transfer public lands. This promise was largely fulfilled in the Eastern states but not in the Western States [insert citation to ALC webpage]. Thus, Rebels argue, the

Western states' constitutional provisions highlight inequity in the treatment of Eastern and Western states at creation. Such a situation, in which a powerful federal government takes advantage of a weaker (at that time) state, represents an unfairness that has ultimately altered the destiny of the Western states.

In addition to recognition of the validity of their constitutional arguments, according to the text of a Rebel speech given during the time period, Rebels were demanding much more from the federal government in pursuit of local control:

1. a guarantee of payment in lieu of taxes (PILT)³ funding to local governments (PILT had and is still threatened at times, though funding is typically a critical element of local government budgets for counties with high percentages of public lands within their borders)
 2. severe restrictions on any public land sales by the state with a constitutional guarantee (this was largely meant to be a source of reassurance for those, particularly environmentalists, who were worried lands would be sold off)
 3. removal of blanket land acquisitions (the federal government can and has “acquired” state lands for military, national park, and other purposes, often without the consent of the states), and,
 4. guarantee of public access to public lands within the state (again to assuage fears of environmentalists to some extent, but also potentially could be used against further wilderness designations depending on how access was defined).
- (Author unknown A., Sagebrush Rebellion Papers, 1967-1984, primary doc. 2, pg. 15).

President Reagan outwardly supported the Rebels' cause stating, “I happen to be one who cheers and supports the Sagebrush Rebellion”, “count me in” (Coates, J., 1986) , while on the campaign trail in 1980, but in spite of their impassioned pleas he ultimately did nothing more for the

³ PILT stands for Payment in Lieu of Taxes, a system that allows states to receive funding from the federal government which they would otherwise receive from property tax rolls. The blanket acquisition piece is in reference to the ability of the government to designate lands within states as federal property for purposes of national parks, military purposes, etc.

Rebels than offer intermittent ideological support and public land scales on a fairly small scale. Instead, he pushed policy matters to his Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, who had a background sympathetic to industry, but who was not immune to the heavy criticism over land transfers. As the movement progressed, Watt himself saw the futility of large scale transfers and began to push a “good neighbor policy” (Nelson, 1984a, pg.33), a policy that promised small land transfers at low costs and greater receptivity of federal workers to local conditions, relationships and needs.

Rebels and their sympathizers touted the economic benefits the federal government itself would reap if lands were given to the states, though scholars typically believe the movement was really about the federal government’s ability to tax, govern and intrude upon those states’ (and/or individuals’) rights to exploit property and resources, without seeking feedback and input from state leaders and the local communities that were intimately affected by these changes. It was that perceived lack of state and local stakeholder voices that may have been the main motivations for Rebels, suggesting they may have been willing to accept less than the actual full divestiture of public lands. This state’s rights point of view is given further credence by qualitative analysis I completed for this research project and will be discussed later; coding revealed that beliefs about the appropriate role of the federal government in the day-to-day affairs of the state’s government were very much at issue in this debate.

The end of the Rebellion. State sovereignty and resource exploitation may have been at heart of most of these disagreements, as ranchers, mining companies and other members of Western communities saw their way of life under attack by environmentalists, but those reasons did not win massive policy change. Though Rebels fought on a national scale against what they saw as increasingly arbitrary and unnecessary federal management of local land and despite the

investment of thousands of dollars in state level studies, the passage of state bills, national and local media attention and a sympathetic president, Rebels soon found the turnover of public lands to the states was going to prove impossible. Dean Rhoads, a leader of the Rebel movement and then a Nevada Assemblyman, ceded that they “have had to face the hard fact that the Federal Government was not going to give one-third of America to the States for nothing” (Nelson, 1984a, p 23).

Though the Rebellion eventually quieted down, the Rebels’ cause wasn’t in vain, as noted by Bernard Shanks in his article, “Uncertain Future for Vast Western Empire: Sagebrush Rebellion”,

“The Sagebrush Rebellion, in terms of its impact on public lands, dwarfs other conservation issues. Undoubtedly, day-to-day management of BLM resources has already been greatly influenced by it. The agency is now generous and accommodating with developers. Wilderness study areas are smaller, development permits are expedited, and grazing levels are maintained. The final outcome remains in doubt, but BLM may find its environmental programs curbed in the months ahead, or that parts of its (that is, the public’s) domain may well be transferred to the states by Congress. The rebellion has focused public attention on some basic questions: Who should own these lands—the nation, states, or private organizations? How should the lands be managed—for immediate or future use? Who should benefit from the public land—local interests or the national public? The western public domain is vast, the issues complex, and the passions high. But every citizen has a claim to the federal lands—and a voice in answering the questions raised by the sagebrush rebellion” (1981, p. 40).

Shank’s summary provides an excellent ending to our discussion of the Sagebrush Rebellion and segue into this narrative research. In recognition of their limited progress, in just a matter of a few years the cries of the Rebels eventually shifted to the “Wise Use Movement”, a movement that embraced the demands of the “privatizers,” as Robert Nelson (1984b), a leading public lands researcher, called them. The public lands from the time period surrounding the Rebellion are still within the public domain, and Westerners continue to fight against that federal ownership and regulation. As Shank mentions, each citizen’s voice is and must be heard in the

continuing debate over the federal estate and the myriad other issues related to natural resource use and preservation, such as; water, air, and wildlife management.

This overview of the history of American land policy has included a brief overview of how lands have been acquired, disposed and retained by and for the American people. During the course of history these lands have been seen as a source of wealth, a start to a new life, a spiritual retreat and our collective national heritage. All of those perceptions are alive and well in our modern context, and provide the backdrop for the Sagebrush Rebellion and our current land transfer debate. In the next section, I cover general policy processes, qualitative methods and an overview of the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF), before moving on to their application the methods section.

General Policy Processes

Public policy is an integral part of our political, financial and social lives as well as an integral part of any research related to the Sagebrush Rebellion. While many definitions have been created to define just what public policy is, there is consensus that while policy is eventually made by the government on the public's behalf, the policy is public, and involves an active public and private set of actors, both of which have their own set of interpretations and motivations for participating in the policy process (Birkland, T., 2011). Policy can be further defined by stating that, "policies are revealed through texts, practices, symbols, and discourses that define and deliver values including goods and services" (Schneider, A. & Ingram, H., 1997, p. 2, Birkland, T., 2011, pg. 9). Defining policy then leads us to defining the policy process, the translation of policy ideas into policies in the public interest (Birkland, T., 2011). The policy process can be broken down somewhat simplistically into the following steps; issue emergence, agenda setting, alternative selection, enactment, implementation and evaluation (Birkland, T.,

2011, pg. 26). While the stages model as listed previously does not include reference to just how involved in the process the public and/or interest groups are, nor how often the policy process doesn't reach every step, it is a coherent, chronological attempt to organize a somewhat messy, but necessary process within the American governmental system.

Given the large amount of issues and information, not everything can be addressed by one political system on a national agenda level. Instead policy problems must be broken down into smaller, more manageable issues. This disaggregation necessarily breaks issues into separate policy subsystems which can be "dominated by a single interest, can undergo competition among several interests, can disintegrate over time, or can build up their independence from others (Baumgartner, Jones & Mortensen, 2013, pg. 62). Policy subsystems have also been called iron triangles (composed of congressional subcommittees, an executive agency and interest groups), issue networks, sub-governments, or issue niches (Kraft & Furlong, 2013). Researchers have developed additional, more complex theories to further define and clarify the policy process.

In this study I initially use a grounded theoretical approach (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996) to uncover specific and emerging themes as they relate to the communications of interest groups involved with the public lands controversy during the Sagebrush Rebellion. While coding I also used the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF) to further analyze the data, to look for patterns and to test the NPF theory. NPF was developed by scholars to empirically analyze narrative components in interest group communications and to study the impact of those components on the policy process. NPF draws heavily on three areas of policy scholarship: 1) the Advocacy Coalition Framework for understanding the policy process, 2) Deborah Stone's work concerning the role of social construction in the policy process, and 3) Emery Roe's

Narrative Policy Analysis. I initially start with an introduction and basic overview of the policy process. I then discuss each of the above three areas of policy scholarship that serve as the foundation for NPF. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the NPF literature and its applicability to this study.

Advocacy Coalition Framework

NPF was inspired in part by a previous theoretical framework developed by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith called the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). The advocacy coalition framework (ACF) is basically a modern variant of interest group theory as it focuses on how competing coalitions interact with each other within different policy subsystems (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993, Kraft & Furlong, 2013). This theory has been applied to policy learning and implementation and can be used to address wicked problems i.e. those “involving substantial goal conflicts, important technical disputes, and multiple actors from several levels of government” (Hoppe and Peterse, 1993, Sabatier and Weible, 2007) of which the public lands issue is a long running one.

This theoretical framework recognizes the fact that how narratives are utilized as strategic tools plays an important role throughout the various stages of policy: planning, design, process and ultimately outcome. The role of governing coalitions are key, as these coalitions, “effect policy change in that coalitional resources expand or contract, depending on whether the administration aligns itself with a group’s core beliefs or not” (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 2007, pg. 102).

The ACF is built upon foundations that have been expanded upon and refined since its 1988 debut. ACF scholars recognize the increasing complexity of policymaking and that participating actors must specialize if they hope to be effective. These actors may fall outside of

the traditional iron-triangle and include researchers who supply scientific and technical information that affects whether or not policy beliefs are actually altered (as altering beliefs proves to be very difficult) (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). The macro-level is where researchers focus on policy subsystems and external factors. Using a time period of at least decade or more for a thorough analysis, the ACF requires the identification of the substantive and geographic scope of the different actors as well as recognition of external factors such as “changes in socioeconomic conditions, changes in the governing coalition and policy decisions from other subsystems” (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, pg. 193).

The model of the individual (micro-level) in the ACF is rooted in social psychology and borrows heavily from prospect theory.⁴ ACF sets out a three-tiered structure of policy beliefs: deep core, policy core, and secondary beliefs. It is also within the ACF that we are introduced to the devil/angel shift, which is based on the notion that people are more likely to remember losses than gains and as such are more likely to “view their opponents as less trustworthy, more evil, and more powerful than they probably are” (Sabatier, Hunter and McLaughlin 1987, Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1999, Sabatier and Weible, 2007, pg. 194). The devil shift will be discussed in more detail later as a component of NPF and in the results section.

According to ACF, the advocacy coalition is the key political actor in the policy subsystem. Advocacy coalitions are groups of actors (these groups can be a large number of actual people, though actual coalitions typically number less than five) who work together to

⁴ Prospect theory is a behavioral economic theory that describes how people choose from various alternatives with regard to losses and gains, using heuristics. Read Daniel Kahneman’s “Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk” for more information related to prospect theory.

reach specific policy objectives because of a shared concern (policy core belief). Advocacy coalitions, as predicted by the ACF, “strive to translate components of their belief systems into actual policy before their opponents do the same” (Sabatier and Weible, 2007, pg. 196). The ACF identifies several resources available to advocacy coalitions as they attempt to win people over to their point of view. Resources like formal legal authority to make policy decisions, skillful leadership, and the ability of coalitions to garner public support and manipulate data (through advertising, data dissemination, lobbying -- all of which can include the use of narratives) are important to the success of advocacy coalitions. Four main paths are predicted by ACF to result in policy change: policy-oriented learning, external and internal shocks and the hurting stalemate (Sabatier and Weible, 2007). This brief summary of ACF shows how researchers use the ACF to look at belief and policy changes over long periods of time as well as allows the researcher to see how elements of the ACF can be incorporated into the NPF (to be described shortly).

Stone’s Policy Process

The NPF framework also draws on Deborah Stone’s influential book *Policy Paradox*. Stone discusses how “narrative stories are the principle means for defining and contesting policy problems”, and that “most definitions of policy problems have a narrative structure, however subtle” (2012, pg. 158). That statement pushes researchers to recognize the value of political discourse in the overall political process. An understanding of Stone’s “mini-theories” about agenda setting, issue and problem definition, and policy dynamics” (McBeth, et al, 2007, p. 88) is helpful to understanding the role of narratives in the policy process and is used frequently by NPF scholars. Stone asserts that the goal of strategic problem definition in narratives is to portray

a political problem so that one's favored course of action appears to be in the broadest public interest (2012, pg. 229).

According to Stone, literary components like characters, plots, colorful language, and metaphors can be used to analyze policy narratives. "In politics, symbols are a means of influence and control" (Stone, 2012, pg. 160), even though it can be difficult at times to determine just where the influence is supposed to be leading the audience. Symbolic political devices like stories of change or power, synecdoche, and metaphors are common narrative components in the policy arena. Symbols allow the authors to create shared meanings and are a means to capture the public or government's attention. When dealing with a broad audience and attempting to bring them over to the side of a particular issue, groups on the winning side of the policy issue don't typically utilize symbols as the use of these symbols may be more likely to push coalitional support to their opponent.

Stone has identified two basic plots that are widespread in policy politics: stories of change and stories of power (Stone, 2012). Stories of change typically include stories of decline, which might include stories of stymied or illusory progress, or change stories might describe progress, change-is-only-an-illusion, or issues on the rise. Stories of change, particularly those of decline, typically start with factual data (statistics, graphs) meant to show that things have gotten worse as determined by the narrator. Stories of power include stories of helplessness, conspiracy, blame-the-victim, or control (Stone, 2012). These stories may present an issue that was formerly beyond a person's control as now being well within their means to solve. Intentional conspiracy stories "always reveal that harm has been deliberately caused or knowingly tolerated" (Stone, 2012, pg. 167) by a handful of people for their own personal benefit. Blame-the-victim stories typically involve placing the control (versus some fated

universal, uncontrollable decision) of the situation under the ownership of the people who suffer from the problem.

Causal stories provide many tools for the narrator, including the ability to put the issue under the control of humans, assign responsibility to political actors who are either the cause of or may be able to solve the problem, and finally facilitate new political alliances (Stone, 2012). Stone describes these causal mechanisms (CMs) in politics by distinguishing between stories that have intended or unintended causes. Accidental (unintended) causes like natural disasters differ from those intentional causes that are the results of purposeful human action (Stone, 2012). Intentional stories are “the most powerful offensive position to take” (Stone, 2012, pg. 2019) because the audience is provided with someone to blame for the situation. As noted before, conspiracy stories are intentional in that they highlight the deliberate actions of a few to deceive others. Inadvertent causes are those where undesirable consequences are a result of well-meaning people or policies, whereas mechanical causes are typically those caused by automation, rigid bureaucratic processes or machines. The various literary tools just mentioned are all typically noticed via qualitative methods. As we shall see in the NPF section, NPF research makes real contributions toward quantifying and analyzing these components of Stone’s narrative storytelling that are meant to effect perceptions of policy problems.

Narrative Policy Analysis

The NPF is built upon and furthers the work completed by Emery Roe and the Narrative Policy Analysis. The NPA is “an analytical framework for researchers to understand problem definitions as they are constructed through language” and it is an analytical tool concerned with “how the protagonist interprets things” (McBeth, M. K., Shanahan, E. A., & Jones, M. D. 2005, pp.414- 415). Emery Roe, author of *Narrative Policy Analysis: Theory and Practice* (1994),

believed that through the application of “contemporary literary theory to extremely difficult public policy issues” (Introduction, para 2, loc. 163, kindle) the structure of narratives could be used to reformulate intractable policy issues and/or actually predict policy success.

Roe defines policies narratives as “stories (scenarios and arguments) which underwrite and stabilize the assumptions for policymaking in situations that persist with many unknowns, a high degree of interdependence, and little, if any, agreement” (1994, Chapter 2, para 2, loc 759, kindle). Roe continually emphasizes the need to look at policy narratives as a way to move intractable policy issues forward. This requires the inclusion of the main interested parties as well as marginalized voices to bring uncertainties and complexities together so that the various parties can define the issue in a manner that all agree with. Using the NPA, Roe believed that people would become more focused on what the actual issue was by reducing complexity and uncertainty. This compilation of narratives would allow the policy issue to move along, hopefully toward an acceptable resolution for interested parties. Roe stated that, “the primary effect of a narrative policy analysis is to defamiliarize and decontextualize what the opposing parties take to be the givens of their controversy by rendering their differences into another story completely, the metanarrative⁵” (Roe, 1994, Introduction, loc 399, kindle).

In pursuit of the previously mentioned goal, NPA scholars use four steps in their analysis. First NPA scholars identify narratives that have specific story elements (beginnings, middle and ends, premises or conclusions). Second they separate the stories from non-stories or counter-stories. The third step consists of creating a metanarrative out of the stories collected in steps 1

⁵ Metanarratives in postmodern literary theory are narratives about narratives

and 2. Finally, after this metanarrative has been created, analysts would determine if the original policy issue has been reframed in such a way as to move beyond current intractability (Roe, 1994, Appendix A, para 1, kindle).

While the NPA possibly offered policy actors a means to move beyond policy intractability through a common metanarrative, critics such as Sabatier pushed aside the value of NPA because they believed the NPA framework did not provide an empirical means to analyze the data. Scholars utilizing the NPA relied on the selection of public consumption documents, which of themselves could be valid (or not) indicators of some underlying concept, such as proponents' beliefs, basic narratives or factual information. Documents put out for public consumption, critics argued, may or may not reflect actual coalition underlying beliefs. A tendency for the methodology to include so much information that it wasn't clear enough to be wrong (or falsifiable) led NPF researchers to pursue a mixed methodological approach, introducing a quantitative element that may allow for greater predictive and explanatory power.

Narrative Policy Framework

The Narrative Policy Framework has been principally put forward and refined through the collaboration and research of Dr. McBeth of the University of Idaho, and his colleagues. The NPF is an integrative approach to narrative policy analysis and policy change theory (McBeth, et al, 2007) and builds upon a conglomeration of various theories of the policy process. The NPF can be characterized as not so much inventing a new process as it is combining/refining old processes. As Shanahan, Jones, and McBeth write of the need for NPF which came to be fully formed in 2010, "the politics of constructing policy reality appeared to be underspecified or missing from mainstream policy process theories" (2013, p. 455). The researchers found that narratives were (and remain) underappreciated in the policy arena, when in fact they are often

instrumental to the creation and passage of policy. McBeth, Shanahan, & Jones, (2005) even go so far as to state that, “narratives are the lifeblood of politics” (2005, 2007).

Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1999) stated that, “through the development of technical expertise, coalitions move toward policy learning. Because of the intense value-based conflict between competing groups, policy narratives are an important element of study for wicked problems and add to the ability of more traditional policy change theories to understand the strategic representation of values in framing the conflict” (pg. 124). Crow, D. & Berggren, J. (2014) further clarify just how useful narratives are when they state the “NPF is a significant step forward in our understanding, analysis and respect for the role of narratives in policy process” (pg. 133), and gives us an empirical means by which we can measure beliefs, strategies and policy outcomes”.

Using the NPF can help scholars understand “the role of coalition communication and outreach strategy in situations” (Crow, D. & Berggren, J. 2014, p 133). Most opinion changes that happen due to coalition narrative strategies are either reinforcing existing opinions or are converting people over to the present narrative, leading to changed opinions and/or coalition action. McBeth and colleagues wanted to prove that narratives created at the policy subsystem level are just as relevant (and legitimate) as those that take place within the legislative arena. NPF scholars push researchers to incorporate the various policy change theories into their overall analysis, to look at the various methods as complementary. Policy beliefs embedded in policy narratives can be used within the NPF *and* the Advocacy Coalition Framework as a measure of coalition stability, strength and cohesion over time (McBeth, et al., 2014, 242).

NPF scholars attempt to empirically operationalize policy beliefs, though their method cannot be used to determine the truth or falsity of the policy narrative being studied (McBeth, et

al., 2014). As noted by NPF scholars Crow & Berggren, “important elements to consider when constructing a theoretically sound study include the level of analysis, unit of analysis, classes of variables, theoretical causal drivers, and types of actors” (2014, p. 139). A distinct advantage of the NPF is the ability of researchers to use it on micro, meso and macro levels of understanding. And while NPF may not determine the “true” narrative of a group, it can measure narrative variables such as characters, structure, plot, content, theoretical causal drivers, types of actors and policy beliefs (these will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter). NPF scholars measure socially constructed realities: “the strategic, the constructed and even the manipulated policy narratives of policy stakeholders who use policy narratives to construct a political reality” (McBeth, et al., 2014, pp. 249-250).

Core NPF assumptions include a reliance on social construction, bounded relativity, generalizable structural elements, simultaneous operations at three levels and the homo narrans model of the individual (McBeth, M. K., Jones, M. D., & Shanahan, E. A., 2014). The NPF operates at three levels; micro (individual), meso (group and coalitional coordination) and macro (cultural and institutional level). The dominant methodology at the meso level, where we focus on policy output, has been content analysis, which remains the primary method despite it being labor and time intensive.

Initially, NPF scholars must determine that the communication in hand is in fact a narrative, which includes at least two, though ideally all four, of the following narrative elements; a setting within a given policy context, characters (typically heroes or villains), a plot (with a beginning, middle and end to the story line) and an overall moral of the story or policy stance (Stone 2012; Ney and Thomson 2000; Verweij et al, 2006; McBeth et al., 2014). After an

initial assessment has determined these elements exist, further analysis can look at strategies, beliefs, evidence of policy learning and further break down narrative components empirically.

Recent application of NPF

Before moving on to the analysis of Sagebrush Rebellion materials, it is helpful to review just how the NPF has been applied to policy narratives in the past. McBeth and fellow NPF scholars have conducted research using the NPF on a recent Yellowstone National Park (YNP) debate. In a precursor to later NPF analysis, a 2004 case study titled, “Public opinion for sale: The role of policy marketers in Greater Yellowstone policy conflict”, McBeth and Shanahan looked at how technical, scientific, economic, and cultural issues may often exacerbate policy conflicts and lead to wicked (or intractable) policy problems. This particular wicked policy problem centers on the ideological divide of those in the environmentalist camp who want recognition and policies enacted for the preservation of YNP as an intact ecosystem in the US, while recreationists, industry, and other community members hold other multi-use beliefs for the Greater Yellowstone area.

In this particular case, McBeth et al were concerned with what they believe to be a “general lack of theory addressing the macro-level driving forces in the political system that influence *how* frames develop among policy actors and the public at large, not just that they do and that they resist collaboration” (McBeth and Shanahan, 2004, pp 319-320). The authors found that the various interest groups, the media, and elected officials went beyond acting as democratic linkage mechanisms. Instead these various interested parties act as “policy marketers who market public opinion to citizens” (2004, pg.319). They found that economic arguments for adaptation, promises of economic compensation, technical solutions, scientific and market based arguments rarely settle conflict. They also found that “cultural values often override interests

leading to conflict” (2004, pg.325). Highlighting just which narrative elements were likely to lead to policy stalemate provides an opportunity for groups to create meaningful dialogue and to ideally move toward a common solution.

Following up on that article, McBeth, Shanahan and Jones authored, “The Science of Storytelling: Measuring Policy Beliefs in Greater Yellowstone” (2005). Their content analysis of public consumption documents quantified policy beliefs for opposing coalitions as they relate to three prominent YNP issues: bison management, the Roadless Rule initiative, and snowmobile usage. The use of mixed methodology in the study ultimately revealed coalitional policy beliefs, particularly those that relate to science, federalism and the relationship between humans and nature. Qualitative and quantitative methods allowed the authors to show significant differences in (and in-group connections to) policy beliefs and showed that NPF could be used to create falsifiable data (which was an initial critique against the use of NPA). The larger theme of the research was in highlighting how the differing coalition policy beliefs “represent the cultural divisions and political interests of Greater Yellowstone. Thus, their scripts liken to democratic contests over the meanings of federalism, the role of science, and humankind’s relationship with nature” (Mcbeth et al, 2005, pg. 426).

In addition, that same article was used as a means to better understand cultural and regional differences. Research has shown that a dichotomy exists between groups of people with the “Old West” view and the views of typically newer emigrants described as the “New West”. This dichotomy has been methodically researched over the course of the recent century and the distinctions are in no small part related to the emergence of a vocal environmental movement and massive in-migration to the West. “New West environmental groups rely on national coalitions, believe in increased social control over private property, and possess a bio-centric

view of humans and nature” (Wilson, 1997, McBeth et al., 2005, pg. 416). This is in contrast to those residents described as being a part of the Old West. Members of the Old West tend to be more utilitarian in nature, identifying as “wise use” groups, who “rely on local constituencies, believe in protection of property rights, and contend that natural resources are to be used for human economic needs” (Wilson, 1997, McBeth et al., 2005, pg. 416).

NPF can also be used to analyze intra-coalitional cohesion “or the extent to which a coalition tells the same story across narrative elements, narrative strategies, and policy beliefs” (Shanahan, Jones, McBeth, & Lane, 2013). In Shanahan et al.’s “An Angel on the Wind: How Heroic Policy Narratives Shape Policy Realities”, the authors analyzed narratives from various oppositional interest groups as well as differences that existed within those who were ostensibly on the same side over a ten-year period. The policy conflict was related to the installation of offshore windmills in the northeast (McBeth, et al., 2014). McBeth et al found that in this policy debate local people were more likely to demand local control of “their” resources, their rights to the federal lands surrounding them, while those not local (and thus not subject to a windmill obstructing their seaside view) tend to think on a more national scale, such as in terms of energy independence. They also found that inter-coalitional differences in use of narrative elements were significant and that intra-coalitional cohesion was likely to be much stronger for winning coalitions (Shanahan et al, 2013).

An additional way in which the NPF has been utilized is to determine if interest groups are actually debating about a particular issue or if the discussion is actually a surrogate for a larger policy issue. Wilson (1997) conducted a case study of the introduction of wolves to the Yellowstone National Park in the 1990s, where he argued that “differential access to social power,” “conflicting ideas about private property,” and “fundamentally divergent beliefs about

humankind's proper relationship with the natural environment'' explained much of the conflict instead of a belief in the absolute danger of the wolves themselves (pg.453). Tierney and Frasure (1998) in further research on the YNP area determined that in the conflict over the introduction of wolves into Yellowstone three themes -- federalism (local vs. national control of land within one's state), science, and the human & nature relationship -- were actually the key elements of political and policy conflict (Tierney and Frasure, 1998; Wilson, 1997, McBeth, Shanahan and Jones, 2005), versus the wolves themselves.

While NPF is typically utilized when a policy outcome has been reached or has moved beyond the public consciousness, in their analyses Crow and Berggren (2014) used a multi-case case study and looked at four different environmental policy cases within Colorado. A goal of this study was "to push the NPF methodologically by moving beyond single-case analysis to test several NPF hypotheses...in a multi-case aggregated analysis, which had not previously been done" (Crow & Berggren, 2014, pg. 134). The narratives were related to a large pipeline project, recreational in-channel water diversion rights, renewable portfolio standards and fracking: issues which varied in venue, topic, coalition size and policy beliefs, timelines, etc. Policy outcomes and narrative tools used by policy actors were the primary focus of this particular study where the results indicated that statistically, winners were more likely to use the villain motif (though the devil/angel shift and the use of science weren't considered important), assign blame and use more narrative elements than their opposition (Crow & Berggren, 2014). By adding a code for "blame", the authors believed they were moving NPF further along by refining the use of Stone's causal theories. Developing this "placing the blame" code in the overall analysis revealed that those coalitions that used this narrative tool were more successful in influencing policy outcomes (Crow & Berggren, 2014, pg. 152).

While Crow and Berggren showed that identification of winners and losers is reflected in policy narratives, McBeth et al (2007), conducted an empirical analysis of the narratives for two interest groups involved in policy debate and change over eight years in the Greater Yellowstone area titled, “The Intersection of Narrative Policy Analysis and Policy Change Theory”. In this analysis, they found that both groups consistently believed themselves to be policy losers as reflected in their narrative strategies. This was in spite of changes within the policy subsystem that should have resulted in winner/loser shifts in narrative communications. In this case both groups saw themselves as the losers and both continually utilized narrative strategies like issue expansion and retaliation which ultimately ensured a “wicked” or intractable policy issue.

These have been just a small selection of case studies reflecting NPF being used to better understand unique policy contexts, coalition communications and policy intractability. Grounded in the theories of the scholars previously mentioned, this theoretical method “is generalizable to any policy subsystem in such policy areas as economic development, energy, crime, and foreign policy” (McBeth et al, 2007, pp. 103-104). It’s application to the Sagebrush Rebellion will be discussed now.

Application of NPF to Public Land Communications

Research related to public land preservation has traditionally come from environmentalists, economists, and others who may describe themselves as representative of “environmentalist” (as defined previously) stakeholders. Industry representatives, while vocal activists, have typically steered away from using supportive scientific data detailing plans related to their policy stances. The arguments activists hold for keeping or disposing of public lands and the fact that Congress has been loath to implement any sort of large scale transfer of lands as a result of the Sagebrush Rebellion are central to this study. This research will complement the

expanding literature on narratives and policy intractability, building on collective public dialogue and a new theoretical understanding of the effectiveness, composition, and intergroup cohesion as reflected by policy narratives. Typically, groups that find themselves in the thick of intractable policy situations tend to focus on disproving the arguments of the opposition; however, in this study I have looked at these policy narratives and evaluated them simply to determine their narrative structure and effectiveness without regard to their perceived truth.

This type of research is valuable as there are currently public land transfer advocates working for much of the same resolutions the Rebels demanded thirty years ago. Those who hope to change policy (or maintain the status quo), may find, upon review, that their narratives need to change in order to realize more successful outcomes. Overall, the application of the NPF to previous and current land policy arguments will add to the growing body of narrative study literature. Analyzing these cases will allow for narrative element analysis, for determining policy learning, and for better understanding this issue's intractability. A discussion of the methodology for this particular research project follows.

Chapter 3: Methods

In the previous chapters I provided an overview of current and historical patterns of public land policy as well as an overview of general policy processes. In Chapter Three I provide research questions, hypotheses, data collection procedures, a discussion of qualitative data analysis and discuss the various narrative elements and how they were operationalized within this study. A “Researcher Orientation” includes a discussion of the intra-coder reliability procedure, limitations, and a discussion of the initial coding process.

Statement of the Problem

Public land policy and ownership is a continuously divisive policy issue, particularly in the American West. The issue dates to before the settlement of the United States and is currently a hot button issue in the domestic and international press. Various groups, with their voices given equal credence due to multiple use mandates, are unable to find common cause and create actual change that is positive in nature and that accommodates their diverse interests.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine archival documents to determine the role group narratives played in the development of public land group policy beliefs and coalition support during the Sagebrush Rebellion.

Research question

Qualitative researchers typically aren’t driven by the need to create specific research hypotheses at the beginning of their studies, instead relying on research questions, but the NPF is built upon the empirical testing of narrative elements and as such a priori hypotheses are standard. Using qualitative research methods and earlier NPF scholarship (Shanahan, E., Jones,

M., McBeth, M., & Lane, R., (2013), pg. 41), the following research question⁶ emerged as relevant to this current study during coding.

“Are there inter-coalitional differences in the use of narrative elements, narrative strategies, and policy beliefs between the two major advocacy coalitions in this case study?”

This research question is broad enough to enable the collection of a rich amount of pertinent data, but specific enough to root out inter-coalitional differences not completely covered by the chosen hypotheses which follow briefly. In line with other NPF work (e.g. Shanahan et al, 2013), findings of significant differences between coalition policy beliefs can not only provide a window into group strategies, but also provides insight into the overall intractability of the policy environment.

Testable NPF Hypotheses

NPF scholars McBeth et al (2007, pg., 94-95, also outlined in McBeth et al, Gupta et al , 2014, pg. 94-95,) have specified hypotheses to test key dependent variables. To test the power of the NPF, I’ve chosen to utilize the following hypotheses which are drawn from the article “The Intersection of Narrative Policy Analysis and Policy Change Theory” (2007, pg. 94-95).

Hypothesis 1:

The narratives of groups advocating policy change (self-perceived losers under the current policy) will portray policy change as benefitting many. The narratives of groups opposing policy change

⁶ See Shanahan, E., Jones, M., McBeth, M., & Lane, R., 2013, pg. 462 for full research questions utilized in other studies.

(self-perceived winners under the current policy) will portray policy change as benefiting a concentrated few.

Hypothesis 2:

The devil shift: the group disadvantaged under the current policy (the Rebels), will utilize the devil shift more often than the groups attempting to maintain the status quo

Hypothesis 3:

The current disadvantaged groups under the status quo are more likely to use policy surrogates than those who advocate maintaining the status quo

Hypothesis 4:

Groups advocating for the maintenance of the status quo are more likely to utilize the use of scientific certainty in their narratives than those advocating for change.

Research process

The primary steps of the methods process were created by referencing the available NPF literature as well as by understanding the overall steps required in any detailed content analysis research. The steps of this study are similar to those found within the content analysis and NPF literature, but are adjusted to fit this research, and are explored in greater detail in this chapter:

1. Creation of research questions and testable hypotheses
2. Gather primary policy documents
3. Establish a policy timeline (e.g. this was to ensure documents that might have been referencing the somewhat similar, but different, era of the “Wise Use Movement” were excluded.)
4. Determined sample, e.g. whether documents were in fact narratives, threw out those that did not fit within paradigm
5. Determined which group (Rebel or Environmentalist) narratives belonged to
6. Kept detailed records in both Atlas.ti and Excel of codes and emerging themes. Analyzed data using software as well as by hand. Both methods were utilized to ensure agreement and researcher reliability.
7. Creation of codebook
8. Established intra-coder reliability, tested using Kappa

9. Conducted analyses of codes and developing themes. Detailed analysis of results can be found in the next chapter

Data Collection

After choosing research questions and hypotheses, documents were gathered and a policy time line was established. Groups of actors, both formal and informally connected, were identified through the initial search. The completion of a thorough literature review and extensive investigation of the Sagebrush Rebellion, both before, during and after, was undertaken and will continue well beyond this particular analysis. As this research is based on looking in hindsight over 30 years, researchers now have the advantage of completing a thorough review of the pertinent laws, historical events, and repercussions both positive and negative of the Sagebrush Rebellion. University of Nevada, Reno Special Collections documents were the primary source for this analysis. In addition to providing coding fodder, the collections also acted as an historical anchor against which to compare narratives to see if the conjectures and warnings of the authors did in fact come true.

Data collected from the UNR special collections boxes included public consumption documents generated by interest groups that reference the transfer or retention of public land during the time periods of 1976-1983, with the bulk of documents being collected from the 1979-1981 time periods. Given that the internet was not a primary means of communication in the 1970s, the researcher relied on press clippings, coalition correspondence, speech texts and other documentation as found within the Norman Glaser, Clifton C. Young, and relevant Sierra Club archival boxes within the Special Collections Department (SCD) of the University of Nevada, Reno. UNR's SCD acts as a depository for various historical documents, allowing the public to peruse their collections for personal and research purposes. Looking at documents is free for the general public and SCD requires only a small fee for the scanning of documents. Document

selection was completed in May of 2015, in Reno, Nevada and documents were received from the Special Collections department in June, 2015.

Sagebrush Rebellion Collection No. 85-04

The Sagebrush Rebellion Collection No. 85-04 housed the bulk of the information taken for further study. The documents within were donated to the Special Collections Department in 1985 by then Nevada State Senator, Norman Glaser. It consisted of three boxes of material, dating from approximately 1967 to 1984. This collection of information was originally collected and archived by Senator Glaser in his support of the Rebellion and includes “reports, correspondence, studies, position papers, fact sheets, speeches, text of legislation, minutes of meetings, and newspaper clippings related to the Sagebrush Rebellion” (Manuscript finding aid, n.d). Senator Glaser’s materials provided a wealth of insider information about the role of the Nevada state representatives who held strategic roles in the Sagebrush Rebellion. His office also utilized a press clipping service that increased the amount of relevant documents beyond the intermountain west and to a nationwide level. In addition, organizations Glaser was involved with such as League for the Advancement of States' Equal Rights (LASER) or the Western Coalition frequently requested that their members send in any letters or opinion pieces they were aware of that related to the public lands issue. These requests are helpful in archival research as they created a wider net for the capture of relevant documents.

C. Clifton Young Collection, 1940-1995

Additional information was found within the materials of Box 2, Series III. C. Clifton Young, 1940-1995, which is also housed within the Special Collections Department at UNR. Young was a native Nevadan who practiced law in Reno. He served in the Nevada State Senate from 1966-1980, was President of the National Wildlife Federation (1981-1983), and sat on the

Nevada Supreme Court (1984-2002) (Manuscript Finding Aid, n.d). Documents included family genealogy, documentation related to his time on the bench, as well as documents pertaining to the Sagebrush Rebellion, of which Young was a vocal opponent (box 2, III/9-12).

Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter Collection, 1962-1987

Fortunately, narratives also exist from a traditional environmental group that was heavily involved in the campaign; the Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter, Series 4, Subject Files, 1962-1987. Referred to by the name “the Sagebrush Hustle”, in box 10:27-32a and then just as the Sagebrush Rebellion in 32b, this set of documents included correspondence, coalition newsletters, and press clippings (Manuscript finding aid, n.d.).

These three sources from UNR’s Special Collections department provided the researcher with 588 separate documents to review. Due to Special Collection Department policies and time and resource constraints, an initial, cursory overview of the documents was completed on site in the Special Collections Department to determine which documents were worthy of further review at a later date. If documents did not pertain specifically to the Sagebrush Rebellion (were of the wrong time period or topic) or were obviously not narratives, they were not included in the final request for copies. I then requested copies of the remaining documents and scanned them later after retrieval of those original (paper) documents from the Special Collections Department. This resulted in a very large sample of the documents surrounding the Sagebrush Rebellion and the agendas of interested parties. One result is that there are hundreds of documents not listed as narratives, but which are included in the overall count. All documents were read to check for themes and narrative elements, and even if they were determined to be non-narratives, they were necessary in providing an overall context of the situation.

This is a particularly time consuming, but arguably necessary, element of working with archival data. The archival collections were just as likely to hold the communications of the party each box represented as well as the opposition. This is somewhat different than today's Internet collections as coalition blogs (for example) in themselves act as a quasi-filter for narrative data as they typically provide just that coalition's point of view. Archival documents must be read in their entirety to ensure that narrative elements do or do not in fact exist as well as to place the documents within historical context. This is particularly helpful for the researcher who may study policy issues that occurred earlier than the researcher's awareness of the issue. For example, news articles also provided a somewhat objective means to triangulate the data as narratives which touted optimism over a specific piece of legislation or a friendly member of the administration could be checked against timely newspaper articles for content and either agreement or disagreement with those points of view. In addition, reading both narratives and non-narratives provided a glimpse into the ways that the national media consistently utilized Old West symbolism in the telling of the Sagebrush Rebellion, providing an added opportunity for future research into symbolism of the American West and how that symbolism in itself may affect Western policy.

Instrumentation

Most of the content analysis completed by NPF scholars has been completed through the systematic review of documents by hand. In an effort both to further NPF scholarship and ensure the reliability of the information collected, the current study was conducted using Atlas.ti, a powerful software program that allows the researcher to fully analyze qualitative data through various features such as: networking and mapping functions, data organization, and various query and analytical tools. The combination of Atlas.ti, Excel and hand-written notes provide

the author with the opportunity for multiple checks on the collected data. Data were reported using queries and basic analysis tools of the software and the use of Excel allowed for sorting, searching and analysis in an organized manner. Written notations, referred to as “benches for reflection” (Frieze, 2014) included comments, definitions and memos, were also kept to cross check against the Excel and Atlas.ti data.

All documents were uploaded into Atlas.ti before they were then coded into their initial categories of “narrative” or “not applicable”. Not-applicable was chosen versus “non-narrative” as several documents were in fact narratives but they weren’t relevant to the Sagebrush Rebellion (for example they may have focused on the Wise-Use Movement which followed the Rebellion) or they may have been duplicates as there was a small amount of overlap both within and between the collections.

Content Analysis & Grounded Theory

I completed a textual analysis of 588 documents from the period surrounding the Sagebrush Rebellion (1976-1981). Content analysis, as described by a Klaus Krippendorff, “entails a systematic reading of a body of texts, images, and symbolic matter” (2004, pg. 3) and is a technique that can provide new insights into the given subject matter as well as inform practical decision-making (2004, pg. 18).

Research for the NPF has relied heavily on content analysis because it is “unobtrusive, allows for reliability analysis, permits a longitudinal analysis, and is efficient and inexpensive” (McBeth, M. K., Shanahan, E. A., Arnell, R. J., & Hathaway, P. L. 2007, pg. 93). Adhering to the tenets of this conceptual foundation should lead to reliable, replicable and valid results, of which more will be discussed later. As a scientific tool, content analysis allows the researcher to increase her understanding of the subject material as “conclusions can be drawn about the

communicator, the message or text, the situation surrounding its creation—including the sociocultural background of the communication - and/or the effect of the message” (White & Marsh, 2006. p. 22).

In this research, the content analysis process required the completion of several steps after the initial collection of data and before analysis began. As discussed by Corbin and Strauss (1990), when using a grounded theoretical approach “the analysis begins as soon as the first bit of data is collected” (pg. 419). This is so that researcher doesn’t miss any relevant themes and cues, and is guided through the data analysis. Analysis in this case began with the creation of a codebook, which was useful for defining variables and for ensuring that data collection is systematic and sequential, capturing all “potentially relevant aspects as soon as they are perceived” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, pg. 419).

White and Marsh (2006) stated that an early point in a content analysis study, the data needs to be “chunked,” that is, broken into units for sampling, collecting, and analysis and Reporting” pg. 29) and the codebook helped create meaningful “chunks”. The codebook had sixteen questions related to issue expansion and contraction, blame, symbolism, the use of scientific or technical data, evidence of the devil/angel shift, appeals to principle, the distinctive use of the New/Old West literary descriptors and then a general comment section for notes that didn’t quite fit into one of the previous listed questions (see Appendix A for the codebook).

These coding instructions, per Krippendorff, were exhaustively formulated, clear, and provided step-by-step instructions for the coder to use (2004, pg. 217). As per Marsh and White, the coding scheme has “clear definitions, easy-to-follow instructions, and unambiguous examples”. Definitions and instructions can be found in Atlas.ti memos, the excel spreadsheet, or in the researcher’s hand written notes, all of which are open for perusal by future researchers.

The point of this meticulous data keeping is to “promote the reliability of the coding, that is, the likelihood that all coders will code the same item the same way or that a coder will code the same item the same way at different points in time” (Marsh & White, 2006, pg. 32). It also serves as both a check on and a window into the research, and is an effort to make the application of the NPF clear enough to be wrong as is required of empirical inquiry (Jones & McBeth, 2010).

After the creation of the codebook, content analysis of the documents was begun to define concepts and variables that would then later be analyzed empirically. As briefly mentioned before, to ensure conscientious coding and recollection of data the codebook was turned into an excel spreadsheet which now houses the codes and justifications for each code or theme.

Hypothesis 1 was tested using a Chi-Square (goodness-of-fit tests) for frequency. Chi-square is a non-parametric test that allows the researcher to determine if observations within a distribution of frequencies are what we could expect to occur by chance (Salkind, 2008). The significance level for this study has been set at $p < 0.05$. The remaining hypotheses were tested using basic quantitative and qualitative measures.

Researcher Orientation

While I did have both codebook and explicit research questions in mind, this was primarily a text-driven analysis where research questions ultimately emerged from the various communications which is in line with grounded theoretical standards. As mentioned previously, qualitative researchers typically aren't driven by the need to create specific research hypotheses at the beginning of their studies as are typically needed in experimental designs (Patton, 1987). However, NPF scholars have shown care in creating a framework able to stand up to the

empirical test of “is it clear enough to be wrong?”, by defining narrative content and structure (Jones & McBeth, 2010) that can be used by different researchers on a range of topics including environmental issues, health care, politics, etc. Through the creation of common elements and encouraging a rigorous positivist approach, the NPF standard is to create or use existing hypotheses, to test and re-test the theoretical framework, “to strengthen the reliability and validity of current findings” (Patton, 1987, pg. 18).

With the hypotheses in mind, I still approached each document with a grounded theoretical intent, with the focus on uncovering specific themes and concepts, whether they fit directly within the hypotheses or not. This meant several things as regards the research such as: codes were created throughout the coding process as themes became evident, definitions and codes were created for terms on a rolling basis, and connections between the materials was made simultaneously. This wasn’t a case of data generating or other analysis techniques where the nuance lies within the statistical data. As White and Marsh noted, “The notion of inference is especially important in content analysis. The researcher uses analytical constructs or rules of inference, to move from the text to the answers to the research questions. The two domains, the texts and the context, are logically independent, and the researcher draws conclusions from one independent domain (the texts) to the other (the context)” (2006, pg. 27). Each communication led to a better understanding of what the group as a whole was saying about the Rebellion, environmentalism, intergovernmental relations and public lands.

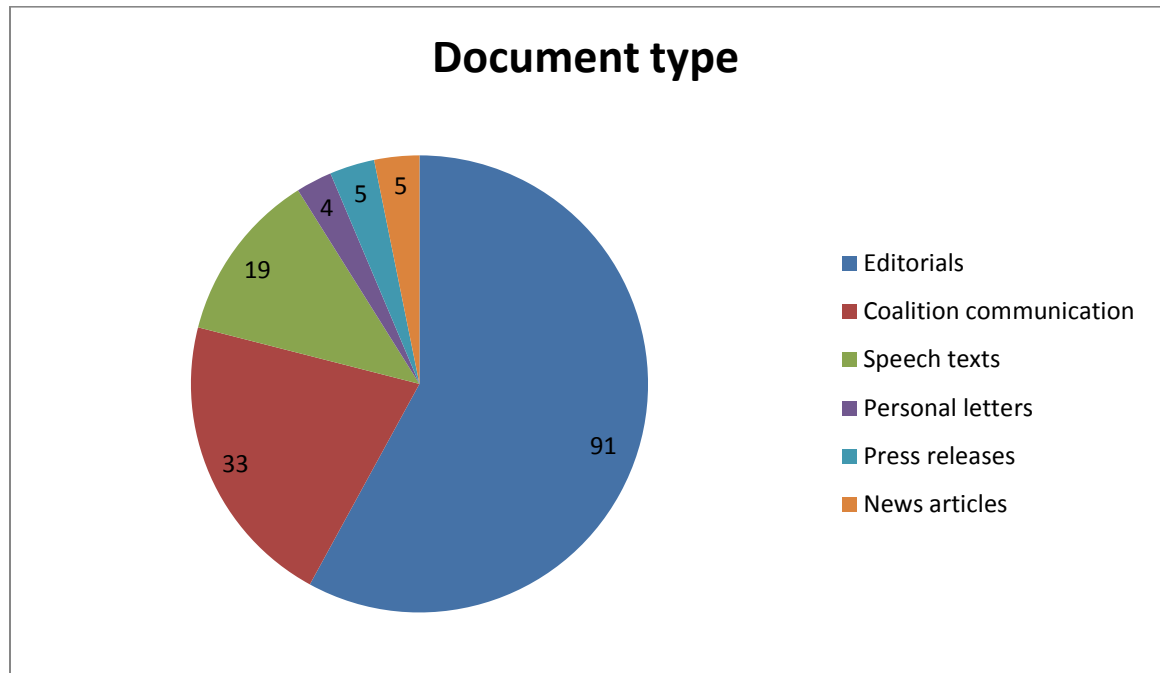
Robert Weber (1990), states that, “the best content-analytic studies use both qualitative and quantitative operations on texts. Thus content analysis methods combine what are usually thought to be antithetical modes of analysis” (pg. 4). As discussed before, using

the NPF requires that after the content analysis is completed we then apply quantitative measures to that qualitative data.

Initial coding

I analyzed each of the 588 documents first to separate narratives from non-narratives (listed as non-applicable on the code sheet) and this left me with a total of 77 Rebel and 75 Environmental narratives for analysis. Each document was given an initial code of the year of publication, the type of document e.g. editorial, speech text, letters to the editor, and personal letters and/or coalition communications like newsletters to the coalition's membership (Rebel or Environmental) and narrative status. Documents without explicit dates and/or authors were included as they were found within the Special Collections boxes, appeared in line with documents of the time (e.g. typed or hand written) and were filled with content consistent with other materials of the time. For the 157 total documents, 33 documents were coalition communications such as group newsletters, 19 were speech text, four personal letters, five press releases, and five news articles which were not neutral in tone. As expected, the bulk of the communications were opinion pieces, with 91 editorials.

Figure 1. Document type for data collection



While utilizing both grounded theoretical methods and the NPF codebook as a reference tool, I began highlighting recurrent themes and literary elements. These themes at times fit within the boundaries of the NPF, though themes that fell outside of the boundary were created and analyzed to show the issue in a larger scope and to uncover more data. To create a more open account of these thematic codes, a brief discussion of each is offered in Appendix B (with credit to Shanahan et al, 2013, pg. 459, for inspiration). Defining the codes can be considered one of the most important pieces of any analysis in regards internal consistency, reliability and ultimately the ability for a thoughtful analysis to be considered.

It is appropriate to mention here just which parties were represented within the collection. As editorials were the primary method of communication, individual contributors with single submissions aren't detailed below. Instead I detail the groups, elected representatives and the newspapers that may have run editorials or other communication pieces with frequency. Editorial staff may have worked directly for the newspaper or were guest opinion pieces written in for inclusion in the press. Contributors included:

- Elko Daily Free Press
- Senator Laxalt
- Clifton C. Young
- BLM
- Las Vegas Review Journal
- Battle Mountain Bugle
- Dean Rhoads, Nevada Assemblyman
- Nevada Select Committee on Public Lands
- Nevada State Journal
- Sierra Club
- Nevada Wildlife Foundation
- Save our Public Lands
- Elko Independent
- Representative James Santini
- Denver Post
- Las Vegas Sun
- Committee to Restore the Constitution

- National Wildlife Federation
- Nevada Appeal
- Rocky Mountain News
- League for the Advancement of State Equal Rights (LASER)
- Reno Gazette

Coding changes

The creation of the coding scheme, though thorough, was not complex. Variances do exist between the beginning codes created and those that remained after analysis, which is in line with most qualitative analysis. As per Marsh and White (2006), “individual codes may be combined after the coding to develop a composite measurement, such as an index, or otherwise grouped to show relationships among the measures” (pg. 32). Analysis is not a procedure that takes place purely at the end of coding, it is a continual process that requires refinement, the merging of common themes, digging deep into emerging themes and tossing out themes that prove to be dead ends. All of this requires frequent reference to the hypotheses and research questions, and all of this may require the actual codes to change as part of the process.

During this research project, the various economic justifications, such as public lands will be sold off, tourism will suffer, the need for energy and mineral development, were all rolled into one code “economic justification. This also happened in the case of policy surrogates, as three codes-- mineral crises, returning to free economic system and relief from reform-- were rolled into a single code “policy surrogate”. In this way, I could analyze the more robust concept of “policy surrogate” rather than be bogged down by the minutiae of which one in particular is being used. This is true also for the code for “victims” which was initially broken into different denotations such as “human”, “environment”, “the entire state”. It became evident that the differences between types wasn’t as important as was the use of the narrative element of “victim”. Science and nature were eventually merged into one code as well and will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter. For here it is sufficient to say that the differences between scientific and natural observations were slim, and both were not used with much frequency.

Intra-Coder Reliability Procedure

After documents were pared down to narratives, a sample of ten documents each was taken from both the “Environmental” and the “Rebels” narratives. The original documents were once again coded in Atlas.ti, with their results compared directly against the initial codebooks by the researcher. This step of establishing intra-coder reliability (stability) is to test for internal consistency and establish one indicator of reliability in the coding of the data. These ten documents were chosen at random by using a computer random number generator (random.org). Comparison between the two coding attempts (time A and time B) revealed a test/retest agreement of 78 percent of the time. This then yielded a Cohen’s Kappa (K) of 71 percent, which is a good and reasonable number considering the number of cases and the nature of this research. The Kappa statistic reveals true patterns and results not due to chance alone.

Limitations

Given that the NPF is a fairly new theoretical framework and that as of yet there has been little, to no, analysis of archival (pre-internet) documents, limitations must be acknowledged. The very nature of qualitative research requires thoughtful, concise record keeping, which was found to be especially pertinent in the case of a 588-document research project. This particular work load may in itself be a limiting factor for future archival research.

The document collection, while large and somewhat national in scope, primarily provided documents that were of specific interest to the three main parties; the Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter and Former Senators Clifton C. Young and Norman Glaser. In addition, as compared against the wealth of correspondence current day activists enjoy as a result of the internet and increased communication abilities, citizen input was limited to that of personal letters to their elected representatives or letters to the editor. Contributing a narrative to support a given stance

required more from citizen participants than compared to the feedback loop we encounter today. That is why these documents are still included even though they, at the time, may not have been public consumption documents. These documents were created by citizens in an attempt to sway the opinions of their representatives and as such are believed to be appropriate for this study.

The exhaustive process I undertook to obtain these documents; contacting the Special Collections department, flying to Reno, reviewing boxes of data, collecting and scanning them, uploading them into Atlas.ti for final analysis, all may be fairly seen as a limitation when compared directly against the NPF scholarship conducted on relatively recent narrative collections. However, there is value in seeking out these special collections; analyzing the documents provides opportunities for comparison to today's similar intractable policy situation surrounding public lands.

Content analysis, like any method of inquiry, does have its limitations. Krippendorff (2004) discussed how the validity of content analysis research is dependent on the researcher's abilities. Weber (1990) also mentions how data reduction or text classification is troublesome unless definitions and categories are defined unambiguously by the researcher so that their study may be replicated.

Delimitations

Given resource constraints, this study does not include a thorough comparison of the Sagebrush Rebellion narratives against the narratives of the current Pro-transfer movement, though the researcher plans to delve into that research in the future. In addition, another coder was not utilized in this particular instance because of time and resource constraints, though the intra-coder reliability measure, the transparency of methodology, and detailed record keeping should ensure that this study is ripe for a thorough critique by fellow researchers.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to search for recurring themes and literary elements that the Rebels and Environmentalist interest groups used to gain favor for large-scale land transfers during the Sagebrush Rebellion. The research method entailed content analysis of documents of the different interest groups to identify narratives used by each to win approval of their agenda, the testing of four hypotheses and analysis of emerging themes. In this chapter, following a description of how codes were operationalized and the analyses of data, the findings related to the research questions and hypothesis discussed within Chapter 3 are presented. As will be discussed in more detail later, I drew on hypotheses from a previous NPF study (McBeth et al, 2007, pg., 94-95) to develop testing for associations, whether positive, negative or not applicable.

Narratives: Definitions and Codes

Peirce, Smith-Walter and Peterson advise NPF researchers to operationalize narrative elements and “state clearly why the documents selected were identified as containing policy narratives to ensure possible replication” (2014, pg. 39). These words are well heeded by this researcher and as such a discussion of how I divided narratives from non-narratives and how various narrative elements were operationalized follows.

Initially, narratives were discerned from non-narratives based on existing policy process literature and recommendations of NPF scholars (e.g. McBeth et al, 2007). Core NPF variables that I attempted to identify included the various elements of a narrative; setting, characters, plot and the overall moral or policy stance (as discussed in Chapter 2). Documents were considered narratives if they met the minimum criteria of having at least one character and had a clear policy

stance (as per the requirements set forth by Shanahan et al. (2013) and (McBeth et al. 2014). A diagram of the required elements is presented in Figure 1.



Figure 2. Components of a narrative

Or stated differently,

“Policy stance or judgment of policy-related behavior + story character = policy narrative”

(from Shanahan, et al., 2013, pg 457)

Because data were collected from those working either for or against the transfer of public lands to the states (or private hands), if policy stances were present they were typically clear; either the narrator was for the transfer of public lands or opposed. As not every document will have a strategy or the elements necessary to be labeled as true narratives, each of the 588 documents were read and analyzed.

Documents that may have included a character, but that did not offer a concise policy stance were set aside to ensure that clear narratives with at least the two elements were informing the analysis. This most often occurred with national media outlets or magazine pieces, both of which tended to present their information in balanced ways without clear policy stances. For example, titles such as, “Santini musters more Sagebrush Rebellion help in Congress” (Lahontan Valley News, 1981), “Con job alledged [sic] at Sagebrush meet” (Kirkwood, 1981), or “Land rebellion gaining support” (Rice, 1979) are just a few of those that though they may have been informing the public about the activities of each group, they were typically missing the key component of having a specific policy stance. So, while informative in setting up a historical context and relaying the particulars of the situation, such articles were not included as primary data sources. If a document was found within the collections more than once, the original (if it was in fact a narrative), was counted and extra copies were not utilized. Duplicates were somewhat common either because there was cross interest between the two groups or were filed twice by the original party. The total of duplicates and non-narratives was 463.

This culling of non-narratives is important in understanding these meso-level communications that were considered primary documents and how (or if) coalitions were strengthening their own belief systems, converting their opposition, or further alienating those with opposing viewpoints in their outreach strategies. In addition to attention paid to emerging themes, imported theories previously described in Chapter Three such as belief systems, the devil/angel shift, policy learning and the scope of the conflict were also elements noted while coding.

Also, note that for this study each document may have the same code appear more than once (for example, blame may have been used more than once in a single narrative). This is because each specific instance of the theme was coded separately (per occurrence), in order to show the use of alliteration and narrative strategies. Each code would only be reused if there was a separate and distinct usage subsequent to the first time it was used within a given narrative. This was done, and marked clearly within the software, to avoid duplication of thematic data and to ensure an inclusive overview of the data retrieved. Specific counts of the occurrences of codes were analyzed using Chi-Square test on the Hypothesis data, a non-parametric test for significance that, in addition to descriptive statistics, is often used by NPF scholars. Hypothesis 1 I accepted or rejected based on the critical value of $p < 0.05$, and was reported using this standard. The remaining Hypotheses were rejected or accepted based on the statistical information gathered. A table representing the data for each Hypotheses is included in the text of this Results section, and at the end of the document, Appendix B contains the basic codes, how they were operationalized, examples of each and a count of instances each code occurred per group.

Results and analyses

This study has been guided by the research questions of NPF scholars Shanahan, E., Jones, M., McBeth, M., & Lane, R., (2013), specifically, “are there inter-coalitional differences in the use of narrative elements, narrative strategies, and policy beliefs between the two major advocacy coalitions in this case study?” (pg. 41). What are the dominant themes in each group’s narratives? What does this say about the overall debate? These questions cover a wide breadth of literary elements, group strategies, and evidence of policy learning.

Policy Winners and Losers

For these Hypotheses to be of value, defining which group is the winning (as in the status quo is the current policy) and which is the losing coalition (which group feels they are losing under the current policy) is essential. McBeth et al (2007) discuss just how important it is that an interest group sees themselves as a winner or loser in the policy debate, as these perceptions can change the group’s overall political strategy. “The “storyteller’s political tactics are revealed in how they construct who wins and who loses in a policy story (or who reaps the benefits and pays the costs), how they characterize policy issues and their opposition, and how they either entangle policies in larger cultural issues or alternatively try to ground such issues in the certainty of scientifically deduced numbers and facts” (McBeth et al, 2007, pg. 88).

Schattschneider in his seminal work, “The Semisovereign People (1975), is the one who initially coined the phrase, “it is the *loser* who calls in outside help” (1975, pg. 16).

Schattschneider further stresses the issue when he states, “the attempt to control the scope of conflict has a bearing on federal-state-local relations, for one way to restrict the scope of conflict is to localize it, while one way to expand it is to nationalize it (pg.11). Groups, in this case the Rebels, who feel they are losing under the current policy regime are likely to take their given

issue to a larger audience, and this competitiveness or “nationalization of politics inevitably breaks up old power monopolies and old sectional power complexes” (pg. 16). These break ups of power however, don’t necessarily mean the issue is eventually resolved, particularly with intractable policy issues such as the public lands debate.

According to Schattschneider (1975), the losing coalition calls in reinforcements so that the group may reach a critical mass of opinions and power to change the status quo. Perceptions of winners and losers don’t always correlate with the actual winners and losers of the policy change battle, as determined by later policy changes i.e. large scale land transfers. However, this may be an added bonus of working with archival documents as we have the ability to see if the policy winners or losers during the particular time of the study, actually correspond to the conclusion, or general waning, of the policy debate. This is of course assuming there is an end to the given policy debate instead of repeated policy debates.

There are 5 narrative strategies (or political tactics) winning and losing groups might utilize to either expand or contract the issue to a larger audience; identification of winners and losers, construction of benefits and costs, the use of condensation symbols and policy surrogates, and scientific certainty and agreement (McBeth, 2007). In the current study, each of those strategies was either directly tested by the chosen hypotheses, identified as an emergent theme, or in the case of scientific uncertainty were marginally used at all.

In this study, according to expectations set forth by the historical record, the Sagebrush Rebels are labeled as the policy losers, in that they saw themselves as opposed to (or losing under) current land policy. This differs from the “winning” coalition, Environmentalists, who were more likely to push for the maintenance of the status quo. In the case of the Sagebrush Rebellion, the identification of policy winners and losers correlates with the final outcome of the

situation as reflected in the historical record. Looking back through the history, we know the Rebels lost this debate on a national scale even though they won some small concessions through the interdiction of James Watts' "Good Neighbor Policy".

Even without looking back into history but looking to today, or into the future, we would know the Rebels feel they are the losers in this policy debate as pro-transfer groups continue the debate with much of the same rhetoric and little change to their actual policy stance. Consider the goals of the current land transfer debate interest group, the American Lands Council, who claim the large scale land transfers to the states are "the only solution big enough to: adequately fund education, better care for the environment, grown the economy: both locally and nationally, and to gain some sense of energy independence" (American Lands Council, n.d.). All of these points (minus education, which will lend itself to future research) were specially mentioned within Rebel narratives from the 1970s. Consider this Rebellion text, "it is our belief that states can best manage the bulk of our public lands, continue to retain them for broad public uses, protect our valuable environment, but at the same time allow for the orderly and efficient development of mineral, timber, and agricultural resources vital to our nation's economy" (Author Unknown B, speech text, n.d). Or, "in short, the Sagebrush Rebellion makes sense for all Americans. The U.S. needs to strive for self-sufficiency in energy and raw materials" (Harrigan, 1980, pg. 2). Senator Blakemore's statements are also echoing today as he believed the transfer would have large reaching consequences as well, "ownership and control of the public lands by the state of Nevada presents many positive opportunities for improving both the state's economy and environment" (1980, pg. 2).

These definitions of policy winners and losers will now be utilized within the following hypotheses. The labels of "winning" and "losing" are integral to the overall analysis and will be

used throughout the hypotheses testing to reflect only their policy objective status and is not intended to be a reflection on the value or worth of the cause itself.

Hypothesis One

H₁: The narratives of groups advocating policy change (self-perceived losers under the current policy) will portray policy change as benefitting many. The narratives of groups opposing policy change (self-perceived winners under the current policy) will portray policy change as benefiting a concentrated few.

$$H_1: P_l = E_{db}, R_{cb}$$

Previously I discussed how when a given group is winning, they attempt to maintain the status quo by highlighting the benefits of the current system. The Atlas.ti code used for analysis of Hypothesis 1 was: *Win/Many*, which was defined as a policy story where it is believed that many will benefit from the change in policy (benefits will be diffuse). Policy losers call for outside help and attempt to bring in outside support for their policy stance as they don't believe many are benefitting from the current system (or perhaps the right people aren't benefiting from the current system). The Atlas.ti code used for analysis of the Losing policy frame and the concentration of benefits was, *Win/Few*, "with this code, the group believes that if the policy change does occur, few will actually benefit (concentrated benefits)" (Appendix B). Strategies for bringing in support or maintaining the status quo include diffusing or concentrating the costs and benefits of a given policy change. Rebels concentrated the benefits 3 times total, while Environmentalists concentrated the benefits of the new policy change 15 times.

For this first Hypothesis the results indicate that policy losers (Rebels) were more likely to diffuse the benefits of the given objective as reflected in the analysis, with Rebels using this narrative strategy a total of 37 times in comparison to the Environmentalists 6 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Portrayal of benefits from proposed policy change in group narratives.

| | Rebels (current losers/advocate change) | Environmentalists (current winners/oppose change) | Total observations |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| Many win | 37 (92%) | 6 (29%) | 43 (65%) |
| Few win | 3 (8%) | 15 (71%) | 18 (35%) |
| Total observations | 40 (100%) | 21 (100%) | 61 (100%) |
| $\chi^2(d.f.=1) = 27.055, p < 0.05$ | | | |

The results show Rebels (advocates for change) were statistically more likely to diffuse the benefits of a given policy objective, while Environmentalists were more likely to concentrate the benefits. Examples of the Rebel's statements that diffuse the benefits of the policy change include this statement from the editors of the Elko Daily Free Press (1981),

“It would seem reasonable to expect that the state would realize a net gain even larger than the \$8 million profit BLM showed in our state during 1980”.

And,

“The Sagebrush Rebels are not trying to “rip off” public lands as is commonly alleged. Rather they are striving for meaningful institutional reforms which would help eliminate waste and inefficiency and, therefore, benefit society as a whole” – (Dowdle, 1981a).

And,

“Such a proposal would go a long way in reducing the national debt, increase the tax base of state and local communities and be a “shot in the arm” for American production of food, minerals and timber” (Rhoads,1981). (note: while this discussion appears to be related to the later wise-use movement, it is actually in reference to the Sagebrush Rebellion)

And,

“When Nevada takes control of her lands, the rest of the country will have less taxes to pay. When the rest of the Western states catch up to us on this issue, the people back East in their cities will have more money to spend on their families” (Snyder, 1980)

The following examples are just two of the six offered by Environmentalists, which diffuse the benefits of maintaining the status quo,

“Arizona's public lands...are a tremendous asset to this state under wise, multiple-use management. They are used for grazing, mineral exploration and development, wildlife management to preserve all of our varied wildlife species, and a wide range of recreational opportunities that make Arizona an open-space jewel” (Avery, 1979).

And,

“All have a lot at stake in keeping the public lands public, and keeping them in good shape today, and for tomorrow” (Herzogh, 1980).

In the previous examples, the Rebels were likely to diffuse the benefits of this new policy outcome, while environmentalists rarely utilized this strategy. The next Hypothesis is concerned with the usage of the devil shift.

Hypothesis Two

H_2 : The devil shift: the group disadvantaged under the current policy (the Rebels), will utilize the devil shift more often than the groups attempting to maintain the status quo

$$H_2: R + D_s < E$$

The “dynamics of conflict creates tendencies for negative judgments to escalate over time” (Sabatier, P., Hunter, S., & McLaughlin, S., 1987, pg. 452). The use of the devil theme is associated with “wicked”, or highly intractable policy issues, and was found to be a common element in both Rebel and Environmental group narratives. Intractability in itself is difficult to measure, as “the definition of a wicked environmental problem itself is in the eye of the beholder, or the stakeholder, and therefore there is no single correct formulation of any particular problem (Balint, Stewart, Desai, and Walters, 2011, pg. 2; Rittel and Webber 1973; Allen and Gould 1986). In this case, the Sagebrush Rebellion could be considered intractable as after its informal conclusion in 1983, pro-land transfer movements have remained relatively quiet but active, with increased activity occurring with the creation of the current pro-land transfer group, the American Lands Council. With the continuation of these demands for public lands turnovers, it seems appropriate to consider this an intractable policy issue.

The previous discussion of intractable policy issues is typically associated with the appearance of the devil shift in group narratives. This narrative element was commonly used in the data set for this study in addition to the use of blame, victims and economic justifications. The devil theme was operationalized for this research as, “actors are likely to overemphasize the bad intentions and power of their opponents while underemphasizing their own powers and influence” (Appendix B).

Perceptions of each other's motives, values, and resources are reflected in statements like the following from the Rebels group:

"The Sagebrush Rebellion is very likely to persist as long as federal management inefficiencies and waste, and the arbitrariness and abuses which characterize politically guided absentee ownership, remain as burdensome as they are today" (Dowdle, 1981a.).

And this statement from an "Old Miner in Battle Mountain" in response to an article by Clifton Young,

"Mr. Young and his bedfellows- the environmentalists – want the federal government to retain control of this land, so that half of it will have restricted use and the other half withdrawn and put into wilderness areas so that only a few of the elite and hardy can ever see it again. They have never adequately explained what they want it for – presumably just so they know it's out there. They speak of a place where they can have solitude, I suggest these kooks go to their bathroom – lock their door and meditate till their heart's content. After all, there is something to be said for jobs and a well stocked larder" (Norris, 1979)

Or, this quote by Bernard DeVoto (a longtime leader of opposition to federal land turnovers) included in an article in *Conservation* magazine,

"A few groups of Western interests, so small numerically as to constitute a minute fraction of the West, are hellbent on destroying the West. They are stronger than they would otherwise be because they are skillfully manipulating in their support sentiments that have always been present in the West- the home rule which basically means that we want federal help without federal regulation" (Reiger, 1985, pg.29).

Table 2: Occurrence of Devil Shift in Policy Group Narratives

| | Rebels | Environmentalists | Total |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------|-------|
| Narrative includes devil shift | 79 | 70 | 149 |
| Percentage of total | 53% | 47% | 100% |

Typical villains included the Sagebrush Rebels or Environmentalists themselves, though references to agents of the Federal Government or the federal government as a larger entity also surfaced. Both groups seemed to have believed federal agencies were owned (or captured) by the other group. This is similar to a previous study completed by Culhane (1981) where they also found that both environmental and economic users within the policy dispute were likely to believe the other group had “captured” governmental agencies such as the BLM or Forest Service.

Both parties, Rebels (79 occurrences) and environmentalists (70 occurrences) were likely to villainize their opponents and overemphasize their malicious intentions, while simultaneously underemphasizing their own power within the situation. Analysis of the data reveals that the devil narrative strategy was used in 97 of the 152 total documents, with Environmentalists using the devil theme in 47% of documents, and Rebels 53%. In this instance, the evidence is consistent with the hypothesis as the Rebels did have a higher usage of the devil theme than the environmentalists.

Hypothesis Three

H₃: The current disadvantaged groups under the status quo are more likely to use policy surrogates than those who advocate maintaining the status quo

$$H_3: R+PS < E + Ps$$

As defined previously in Chapter 3, policy surrogates are narrative tools used when one party is purportedly discussing one issue i.e. land policy, and is in actuality discussing another. McBeth et al (2007) associate the use of policy surrogates with groups advocating for change from the status quo (policy losers), and state that surrogates “are used to ignite the larger controversies already simmering in the political culture and to mobilize opposition”. This blurring of the lines

within a single group's narratives, typically the losers, creates more issues and the public must sort out whether they are comfortable with the entire message the group has created. Policy surrogates represented in this study by both Environmentalist and Rebels were somewhat similar and included reference to a return to the free enterprise economic system, failure to develop minerals domestically, as a means to restore the Constitution, and supremacy of the state over the federal government. In an especially prescient statement in a coalition correspondence from the Sierra Club,

“as is the case with other political movements, it attracts followers who hope to use its perceived popularity or success as coattails for their own issues, thus applying the “Sagebrush Rebellion” to an ever-increasing variety of topics” (Brant, 1980).

There were fifteen documented occurrences (Rebels = 9, Enviro=6) in 15 total documents of policy surrogates.

Table 3. Occurrence of the Policy Surrogate Strategy in Group Narratives

| | Rebels | Environmentalists | Total |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------|-------|
| Occurrence of policy surrogate | 9 | 6 | 15 |
| Percentage of Total | 60% | 40% | 100% |

The evidence is consistent with supporting Hypothesis three. The existence of policy surrogates within this policy debate is in line with other natural resource issues that have been the subject of NPF research in the past (Consider the Yellowstone wolf reintroduction as discussed in Chapter Three). Also, as discussed before, Rebels were in part reacting to what they believed to be an overly powerful environmental lobby. While this may also point to the devil shift (feeling opponents are overly powerful) and/or feelings of victimization, it also points to concerns other than that of the public lands transfer. Rebels' narratives were more likely to "suggest a broader concern regarding the structure of the public land policy arena" and an overall concern that their commodity interests were no longer considered in the federal planning and decision making process (Crawley ,1993, pp. 4-10).

Hypothesis Four

H₅: Groups advocating for the maintenance of the status quo are more likely to utilize the use of scientific certainty in their narratives than those advocating for change.

$$H_5: E + Sc < R + Sc$$

Winning groups are expected to utilize a narrative strategy of defining the issue, in this case public land transfers, in terms of scientific certainty. By doing so they are in effect ignoring other issues that are either overtly or covertly part of the policy debate. According to McBeth et al, "such a certainty attempts to bring closure to debates surrounding policy issues, maintains the status quo and the minimum winning coalition, and simultaneously hopes to demobilize the opposition" (McBeth et al, 2007, pg.92). Losing groups, who are more likely to expand the issue in the first place, must keep deliberations open and as such are expected to refute scientific certainty.

References to ecosystems, wildlife and the perceived damage of grazing on these fragile lands may have been intermittently used by the Environmentalists. However, besides the

instance where two competing narratives were paired together within the archives (Bowland and Dowland debate, found below), it is difficult to determine whether Rebels were using scientific uncertainty in response to a given statement of scientific certainty.

While the use of scientific and natural justifications for retention or disposal of the lands were evident their numbers were not seen in near as high frequency as that of economic justification (n=165).

Table 4: Use of Scientific Certainty in Group Narratives

| | Rebels | Environmentalists | Total |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------------------|-------|
| Occurrence of scientific certainty | 4 | 12 | 16 |
| Percentage of Total | 25% | 75% | 100% |

As hypothesized, Environmentalists did use the narrative element of scientific certainty.

Examples of Environmentalist scientific certainty include an article by Mary Boland in the Glenwood Post (1980), in which she discussed scientific evidence presented at the United Nations Conference on Desertification,

“The growth of desert on this planet is proceeding at such a rate that deserts worldwide are claiming an area the size of Maine each year. Overgrazing by domestic livestock seems to be the main reason for this” (Boland, 1980).

In a rebuttal to Boland’s article, Barney Dowdle responds that,

“Simplistically attributing resource management problems to human selfishness and greed fails to consider what economic and social philosophers have been telling us for more than 200 years. That is, bad outcomes are not necessarily the result of bad people; rather, they may be caused by a failure to develop institutional relationship arrangements within which people can pursue their own self-interest and serve the public interest in the process” (1981a).

Notice the dismissal of the scientific basis for desertification and the quick transition to economic values and private property rights. The use of scientific uncertainty is a narrative tool often used by losing coalitions, but in this study the coding scheme didn’t quite capture the specific instances of uncertainty.

Graf (1990), discusses how in reality, helpful evidence-based scientific information during the Sagebrush Rebellion was missing. This “information void meant that the issues were debated on moral and philosophical grounds without substantive discussion of the scientific value of wilderness to society. Additionally, scientific analyses of the different impacts of federal versus state management of public lands based on demonstrable evidence rarely entered into the sagebrush rebellion debate” (Graf, 1990, pg. 244). This is further supported by the work of Char Miller, who stated, “since the early twentieth century, western ranchers, loggers and livestock operators, and their local state, and national political representatives, have revolted

against the imposition of regulations and user fees associated with their desire to exploit relevant resources on the public lands” (Miller, 2012, pg. 8). This supports the notion that economic values were of more importance to the Rebels.

Economic justification. The use of economic data and justifications were the narrative strategies most often utilized by Rebels (84) and Environmentalists (81) to support both retention and disposal of public lands. Rebels were more likely to discuss the supremacy of the state in its ability to handle the efficient management of the public domain. Rebel statements were framed as such,

“ the figures available demonstrate Nevada would have no financial problems in assuming jurisdiction over the lands” (Elko Daily Free Press, 1981)

Or,

“if the Reagan administration is serious about maximizing the returns from the Federal Government’s 700 million acres (one-third) of the nation’s land), it would put some of it in the private sector” (Rhoads, n.d.)

These themes of the economic necessity of the land turnover and the superiority of local control were central to Rebel narratives and “in line with much of the conservative ideology that is associated with the Rebellion motives” (Graf, 1990, pg. 244). While Environmentalists’ usage of economic data were different in nature, and were typically used to highlight the inability of the states to manage the lands economically. In addition, often economic data were used to highlight the greedy nature of the Rebels, and how these Rebels hoped to exploit the public lands for private gain. Illustrative comments included:

“by selling them so prematurely, the public is getting bottom dollar for its oil and minerals, while the corporations that will now control the pace of development can extract them and sell them back to consumers” (Shanks, 1982)
and,

“The expense of administering these lands would necessarily result in, (1) new taxes for Nevada taxpayers, (2) inadequate management of the lands (and/or) (3) sale of the lands

involved” (BLM Viewpoint, 1979). These last quotes about the emergent theme of economic justification is an appropriate segue into the next section on emergent themes. This is the final analysis and discussion of the four Hypotheses with this study. The next section is an overview of the emergent themes and findings of this study.

Emergent themes and findings

While coding, I kept detailed notes of emerging themes and narrative elements, looking for patterns of usage and information that might inform this overall study. These subjects are best described as coming up under the research question,

“Are there inter-coalitional differences in the use of narrative elements, narrative strategies, and policy beliefs between the two major advocacy coalitions in this case study?”

In this sub-section of Chapter Four I will briefly cover the use of condensation symbols with particular emphasis on the New/Old West symbolism, blame, victims, origin arguments, equity and fairness, and principle. Specific Hypothesis testing does not occur within this section: instead a table of descriptive statistics highlighting coded occurrences of specific texts is included.

Table 5. Percentage of documents coded for different emergent themes and policy stances

| Code Name | Total Occurrences | Sagebrush Rebels | Environmentalists |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Symbols | 23 | 8 (35%) | 15 (65%) |
| New West | 47 | 24 (51%) | 23 (49%) |
| Old West | 105 | 45 (43%) | 60 (57%) |
| Blame | 101 | 56 (55%) | 45 (44%) |
| Comparison East v. West | 23 | 20 (87%) | 3 (13%) |
| Equity and Fairness | 13 | 11 (85%) | 2 (15%) |
| Principle | 67 | 44 (66%) | 23 (34%) |

Use of condensation symbols. Typically, losing groups will utilize symbolic language to often negatively portray their opponents (McBeth, et al 2007). Winners typically avoid using symbols because, as noted before, they want to ultimately keep the conflict small and avoid bringing in a lot of outsiders who may question the use of symbolic imagery.

However, contrary to these expectations, the Environmentalists were more likely (n=15) to use symbols than the Rebels (n=8). Environmentalists for instance, called James Watts morals that of a “pirate” (Shanks, 1982) and described the beautiful landscape and “loving arms” of the Seven Sisters (Shanks, 1982). In contrast, Rebel symbols included one used by the Public Land’s Taskforce, featuring a lone cowboy against a bleak backdrop with the words, “Welcome to the West, Property U.S. Government” circling him (Watson, 1979, pg. 2).

Another literary device which evoked symbolism was the utilization of either the “New West” or “Old West” descriptor for people, values and places. One author states, “melodramatically, today’s land use controversy may be seen as the good guys versus the bad guys, the spoilers against the savers, the likes of J.R. Ewing and Miss Ellie and Donna Culver” (Lynch, 1981). The author is using the characters from Dallas, a TV soap opera that revolved around a wealthy oil and ranching family from Texas to provide his audience with imagery of the heroes and villains involved in the Sagebrush Rebellion.

References to Dallas weren’t the only references to Western imagery. Empirical research and the media often break down residents of the West into “New” or “Old”. In an article titled, “*Social Landscapes of the Intermountain West: A Comparison of ‘Old West’ and ‘New West’ Communities*”(2007), the authors discuss how communities reliant on extractive industries are typically less “new” west and that resource exploitation (one of the hallmarks of the “Old West” attitude) are no longer the primary breadwinner for the region as tourism and

recreation are building up current “New” communities. Simplistically, they break down the difference between the two groups into “Old” – miners, loggers, cowboys, ranchers, horses, while the “New” are more likely to be sporting Patagonia and be telecommuting professionals or retirees. These new in-migrants are more likely to value the land for aesthetic, recreational qualities than for their economic value (Winkler et al, 2007).

Old West symbolism often consists of images of the very people who brought forth the Sagebrush Rebellion. Its origins are due to the efforts of western ranchers who were reliant on public lands for their living and who were often in positions of power within their communities and states. At that time, ranchers held one-third of legislative positions in some states (Graf, 1990). “Only in ranching could the individual operator play a significant role, and so the rancher became the ultimate role model of the region - independent, rugged, oriented to an outdoor lifestyle that for western residents was rapidly fading into myth” (Graf, 1990, pg. 120). However powerful ranchers may have been, their Old West view was under attack, as “for many residents and visitors, public lands are valued more significantly for their recreational and aesthetic properties than for the commodity production activities that once dominated land management policies and practices” (Power 1996 as quoted in Winkler et al, 2007, p 484).

While the New and Old West symbolic devices were used in the actual narratives, they were not used quite as frequently as in the documents that were not actual narratives. Similar to the findings of Shanahan et al (2008), while reviewing non-narratives during the course of this research it became clear that New and Old West descriptors were used differently. For Shanahan, national papers were more likely to use New West cues and descriptors, while local papers were more likely to use Old West. In this research, examples of national press pieces and magazine articles show they were more likely to utilize the image of the “noble rancher” and the

wilderness enthusiast, than were the communications of those Rebels and Environmentalists who were actively creating true narratives in the policy debate. This is a distinction worth noting, as those outside of the debate actually romanticized the image of the Western Rancher, their rugged idealism and independence, when presenting these supposedly neutral articles. These myths and the reliance on symbolism by the media, Shanahan found contribute to policy intractability as well as policy learning (2008).

Graf discusses the American preoccupation with these types of Old West symbols and how the “mythical quality of western independence does not diminish its influence, however, and as long as citizens of the region believe in the myth, it guides their political actions as though it were reality” (Graf, 1990, pg. 262). The Old West was used often on both sides of the debate, with the Environmental groups more often likely to utilize the Old West trope (60 occurrences) versus the New West (n=23). Rebels utilized both symbolic devices less, with Old West (45) and New West (23). However, in terms of actual documents (versus occurrences) that housed the Old West symbol, 77 of the 152 narratives (nearly half) have some sort of reference to the Old West and may actually be a reflection of who in reality expanded the conflict, Western ranchers, members of the Old West themselves. It is beyond the scope of this research to draw specific patterns of usage and to say that each side was likely to use either trope derogatorily or in an appreciative manner. Rebels were just as likely to discuss the advantages to recreationalists as environmentalists were to discuss the bounty to be gained by ranchers if lands were transferred.

Comparison arguments. Also of note were statements related to fairness and equity. These were used infrequently by Environmentalists (3), but were relatively common for Rebels (20) as measured by the code “*Comparison: East vs West*”. While it is common for imagery to evoke the unfair status of the East enjoying their lands within state or private lands, there were

very few concrete examples given of specific cases. For example, in regards to requests for federal cases to be heard in a local court,

“this may seem a simple thing, but it is mighty important to westerners, who think they often get a raw deal when cases are decided in the east by Easterners who do not truly understand Western problems or needs” (Author Unknown C., 1980).

While that narrative was addressing the beliefs about equality between the states, they are different in nature to the arguments about the unconstitutionality of Western states’ entrance into the Union. For example,

“As a condition of statehood, western states were required to allow Uncle Sam to maintain title and control of the public domain. Eastern states were not required to enter the Union under such circumstances” (Santini, 1981)

These arguments exist because historically the West has been reliant on Eastern (or foreign) capital to brave the environmental and economic instability of the region. This exchange in effect required Westerners to relinquish control over their own destiny which then developed into a sense of exploitation and colonialism (Graf, 1990, pg. 120) that exists to this day.

Environmental groups looked at fairness as well, but rarely, if ever pursued the constitutional or other origin arguments. Environmentalists were widely opposed to the idea of the turnover, primarily because of fears over the loss of a national heritage or because they believed the turnover would drastically degrade the environment and/or create such an economic burden on the states as to drastically increase taxes or require lands to be completely sold off to private interests.

Blame. This is a variant of Stone’s “change-is-only-an-illusion story” (1990, pg. 165) and is an intentional causal mechanism (like oppression, conspiracies). For example, it was common for narrators to discuss how the West continues to decline, how the West is indeed a

colony of their eastern counterparts. That in fact, things are not getting better, but instead, the West continues to decline politically, economically and socially as a result of being disenfranchised by federal bureaucrats and through federal retention of public lands. Rebels were more likely to cast blame (56) over that of Environmentalists (45) and the code appears in 87 of the 152 documents (57%). Examples of blame include the following statements by Rebels and environmentalists,

“in fact, the federal government actually may be making the patient worse instead of better. As you have heard time and time again, Uncle Sam literally owns and controls one third of America” (Santini, 1981) (the article continues on with a further discussion of blame)

And, Dean Rhoads’ speech included more laying of blame,

“our most difficult task is to cut through the political posturing and dissembling arguments of special interest groups which benefit from leaving things as they are”

Environmentalists laid the blame as well, such as this statement from an editorial at the Las Vegas Sun,

“through the vigorous efforts of a few ranchland legislators, the Nevada “Sagebrush Rebellion” has drawn wide interest and attention” (Las Vegas Sun, 1979).

And,

“it is present policy to keep most of the public lands in public ownership –our ownership. That is what the land grab promoters want to change” (Trueblood, n.d.).

This also ties into “causal theories” of Stone (pg. 208). The use of causal narrative tools is advantageous for both sides of a policy issue. Rebels asserting that the government has intentionally caused the West to be lesser in stature than their eastern neighbors is an example of a guided, intentional cause. “Asserting a story of intentional cause is the most powerful offensive position to take because it lays the blame directly at someone’s feet, and because it

casts someone as willfully or knowingly causing harm. In this kind of story, problems or harms are understood as direct consequences of willful human action” (Stone, 2012, pg. 209).

Stone’s “help-is-harmful” (2012. pg. 211) argument which looks at government intervention in the free-market as inadvertently causing the harmful side effect of government waste, inefficiency and unfairness between the states is applicable to the initial goal of the Rebels who sought to have the lands turned over to the states for their own, better, management. This causal theory is the primary theme of Rebellion narratives. “The fight is about locating moral responsibility and real economic costs on a chain of possible causes” which doesn’t necessarily have to rely on “statistical proof or causal logic” (Stone, 2012, pg. 226). Examples of blame include: “Most of the support of the Sagebrush Rebellion comes from cow county Assemblymen” (Glassburn, 1980) or, “because not only has the federal system been messy from the beginning...but we all see it getting moreso [sic]with its huge, sprawling, weed-like proliferations reaching a point where it seems out of control” (Capitol Commentary, 1981).

Equity, Equality and Principles. Equity and equality themes also frequently emerged in this situation, even if it is not entirely captured within the coding count. The issue of individual and collective unfairness towards Western states and individual landholders and corporations is a reoccurring theme in the narratives. Equality is defined as Stone used it, “to denote sameness and to signify the part of a distribution that contains uniformity”, while equity denotes “distributions regarded as fair, even though they contain both equalities and inequalities” (2012, pg 41). *Equity and fairness* is operationalized in this study as a “policy stance that the resolution is required to ensure states and citizens are treated equally” (Appendix B). There are various dimensions of equality, and though the Rebels (11) were more likely to use the argument than Environmentalists (2), the usage is still small. This data is backed up by Graf (1990), who

stated that, “In previous rebellions the legal route had been abandoned because western spokesmen admitted that their claims to the public domain rested not in law, but in a sense of equity” (pg. 230).

References to personal and collective principles were frequently used by the Rebels (45). During the Sagebrush Rebellion however, Rebels often looked at public lands as a collection of federal and individual property rights, versus that of common public goods. For the purposes of this study, *principle* was operationalized as, “related to ideas of freedom, destiny, state’s rights and fundamental moral beliefs” (Appendix B). Analysis reveals this particular issue is at the heart of much of the debate – are these lands in fact part of every American’s heritage? Or are they best left to those who work and visit those lands on a regular basis? Does proximity equal ownership? Ultimately, the arguments are concerned with how each group saw the origination of their rights, whether their rights were collective or individual or if those rights were positive, government backed rights of the polis or normative rights derived from a different source (Stone, 2012, pg. 333). Much of the debate regards states’ rights, positive (polis) rules in effect that are keeping the states from their rightful ownership of those lands.

Summary. In this chapter I have presented the data, statistical analysis, and results for this particular study. Evidence supported the four hypotheses provided and I have uncovered several themes that appear to be relevant strategies used by either group such as the New West/Old West symbolism, blame, and appeals to principle. In the next chapter I discuss those findings, discuss the NPF as a theoretical framework, the application of this study to the current public lands policy debate and finish the paper with concluding remarks.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to search for recurring themes and literary elements that the Rebels and Environmentalist interest groups used to gain favor for large-scale land transfers during the Sagebrush Rebellion. Out of 588 total documents, 77 were identified as Sagebrush Rebel narratives and 75 were Environmentalist narratives while the rest (436) were not utilized as primary documents. These narratives were content analyzed for policy narrative elements: identification of winners and losers, diffusion or concentration of costs and benefits, and use of condensation symbols, policy surrogates, and science.

Discussion of Hypotheses

A total of four hypotheses were tested in this study with descriptive statistics and examples of coalition narratives provided to support the findings of this study. A brief review of each of the Hypotheses follows.

H₁: The narratives of groups advocating policy change (self-perceived losers under the current policy) will portray policy change as benefitting many. The narratives of groups opposing policy change (self-perceived winners under the current policy) will portray policy change as benefiting a concentrated few.

In this study the advocates for change, the Rebels, diffused the benefits of the policy change while environmentalists were more likely to concentrate the benefits of maintaining the status quo.

H₂: The devil shift: the group disadvantaged under the current policy (the Rebels), will utilize the devil shift more often than the groups attempting to maintain the status quo

Higher incidence of the devil shift was evident and the continual intractable, or wicked nature, of this issue serves to confirm this finding. In order to create meaningful dialogue between opposing groups, it is essential members of these groups have realistic views of the power, legitimacy, resources and character of each other. Sabatier, Hunter and McLaughlin (1987) discuss just how misperceptions of the opposition, especially within high conflict policy arenas are common. Cognitive dissonance, differential availability of information, ego defense reasons and attempts by interest groups to create internal cohesion are possible reasons for a high use of the devil theme.

In this study, both groups were likely to overestimate the power of the other; the Rebels saw the environmentalists as having increasing power at the federal level due to such far-reaching acts as the Clean Water Act and the FPLMA. But, even though Environmentalists were enjoying increased visibility due to those laws and the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964, Rebels were also enjoying national media coverage and the advantages associated with having President Ronald Reagan and his Secretary of the Interior, Jim Watts, publicly support the Sagebrush Rebellion. In addition, and as noted before, Rebels were a significant presence within the Legislatures of Western States, an occurrence that is largely responsible for the successful passage of numerous bills and resolutions in support of the Rebellion. While both groups saw each other as ultimately more powerful than the other, the power differential was likely smaller than either group truly believed.

H₃: The current disadvantaged groups under the status quo are more likely to use policy surrogates than those who advocate maintaining the status quo

In the case of policy surrogates, Rebels did utilize that particular narrative strategy more than environmentalists. Returning to the free enterprise economic system, responding to energy and mineral crises, restoration of the U.S. Constitution were common policy surrogates of the highly conservative Rebel group. Tying the land transfer issue into larger issues like free enterprise and energy independence allowed the Rebels to make what may have been considered a Western public lands issue national in scope. This served to encourage people (even Easterners) who may have only a passing knowledge of how public lands are so heavily contested in the West to join in on the Rebel cause.

When Environmentalists used policy surrogates, they were referencing the various roles, besides land transfers, of the Sagebrush Rebellion. Perhaps the Sierra Club communication that contains the following quote explains the situation the best,

What is the Sagebrush Rebellion? There is no easy answer, of course, since various interests are promoting it for a variety of reasons. The collective manifestation is an attempt to divest the federal government of the title to most of the federal public lands, and replace that title in the individual states in which the lands are located. Behind that statement are myriad hidden agenda[e] [sic] which will be discussed later. As is the case with other political movements, it attracts followers who hope to use its perceived popularity or success as coattails for their own issues, thus applying the “Sagebrush Rebellion” label to an ever-increasing variety of topics (Brant, 1980).

There were zero instances of the Environmentalist’s agenda being viewed anything other than opposition to the large-scale land transfers which fits with their role as the policy winners. This is very much in line with what we would expect from policy winners, who have little to gain by broadening their agenda and attracting in outsiders who may wish to change their agenda. However, despite their lack of the use of policy surrogates, Environmentalists did incorporate symbols into their communications. Symbols are much like policy surrogates in that

they serve to increase coalitional attractiveness to outside people and technically, the usage of symbols should have been small to non-existent for the Environmentalists.

The use of scientific and technical data were also used to some extent though not in the numbers we might expect in a resource based conflict. We might have expected the Environmentalists to focus more of their argument on scientific data, instead of more normative discussions about fairness and equity. If Environmentalists did use scientific data, particularly about grazing and its effect on the public lands, Rebels were more likely to offer solutions in terms of securing property rights than in casting doubt (scientific uncertainty) on the role of grazing in poor public land quality. Economic justifications were the primary narrative elements found within both group documents under analysis. This may be a matter of “fighting fire with fire” and each group mirroring the other’s tactics or, at the time, this may have been a common means to support a given point of view. Further research could uncover just why, in this policy arena, economic justification was used as a primary means of justification for the communications.

Before moving on to an analysis of the NPF, a brief summary of the various themes and codes used throughout this research, with a breakdown of just how often each group utilized each theme, follows.

Table 6. Summary of Occurrences of Narrative Elements

| Code Name | Total Occurrences | Sagebrush Rebels | Environmentalists |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| H ₁ : Win/Many | 43 | 37 (86%) | 6 (14%) |
| H ₁ : Win/Few | 18 | 3 (17%) | 15 (83%) |
| H ₂ : Devil theme | 149 | 79 (53%) | 70 (47%) |
| H ₃ : Policy Surrogate | 15 | 9 (60%) | 6 (40%) |
| H ₄ : Scientific data | 16 | 4 (25%) | 12 (75%) |
| Symbols | 23 | 8 (35%) | 15 (65%) |
| New West | 47 | 24 (51%) | 23 (49%) |
| Old West | 105 | 45 (43%) | 60 (57%) |
| Blame | 101 | 56 (55%) | 45 (44%) |
| Comparison East v. West | 23 | 20 (87%) | 3 (13%) |
| Equity and Fairness | 13 | 11 (85%) | 2 (15%) |
| Principle | 67 | 44 (66%) | 23 (34%) |

In addition to the wealth of materials reviewed and analyzed as part of this study, I was also analyzing the usage of the NPF as an explanatory and predictive tool. I briefly review some of the positive and negative attributes of the NPF, with some comparisons included to more traditional qualitative methods.

Analysis of the NPF

Ultimately, the purpose of this research was two-fold. First, it was a means to create a lens by which we can to empirically review Sagebrush Rebellion narratives and determine why this issue remains intractable, appearing again and again on the national agenda, with similar (if not identical) narratives and second, it was a means to test the viability of the Narrative Policy Framework as an empirical tool.

McBeth, et al, state, “it is widely accepted that how a story is rendered is as important to policy success and political longevity as what actions are undertaken” (2014, pg. 225). They further discuss how the NPF is a new theory that asks whether narratives play a role in the policy process and this is important for two reasons; policy entrepreneurs are turning policy debates into debates over competing narratives and social media proliferation brings these narratives directly into the public consciousness quickly.

In this paper I utilized grounded theory as well as the NPF. To reiterate, the basic questions I sought to answer with the NPF were: “What is the empirical role of policy narratives in the policy process and do policy narratives influence policy outcomes?” “NPF is a significant step forward in our understanding, analysis and respect for the role of narratives in policy process” (p 133). It gives us an empirical means by which we can measure “beliefs, strategies and policy outcomes” (Shanahan, 2013, pg. 133). We seek to answer these questions by looking at how narrative elements and strategies are utilized by groups, which eventually may shape

policy action and agenda setting and applying qualitative statistical tests to support hypotheses formulated by NPF scholars.

With the NPF, researchers are essentially quantifying qualitative work, when an argument could be made that qualitative work needs no particular justification; it is worthwhile and meaningful in and of itself. Though Stone mentions that “numbers impart an aura of expertise and authority to the people who produce and use them” (2012, pg. 191) as well as among other attributes, it “promises a distinctive kind of conflict resolution” (pg. 195). Stone (2012) exhorts us to, “think of numbers as a form of poetry” (pg. 183) and discusses just why counting, numbering items, is a political act. She discusses how counting begins with “categorization” (pg. 184). As is common in content analysis, “we categorize by selecting important characteristics and asking whether the object to be classified is substantially like other objects in the category. Categorization thus involves establishing boundaries in the form of rules or criteria that tell whether something belongs or not” (p. 184).

These criteria are typically set up by the researcher and though they may be clearly explained, clearly replicable, they are not entirely without their own set of issues. Counting requires judgment as to inclusion and exclusion of data, which subjects the analyses to issues of wrongful exclusion and wrongful inclusion (pg. 185-186). Specifically, content analysis is a data reduction technique that is systematic, replicable and reduces a lot of text down into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. Fault typically lie with the researcher who may create faulty definitions of categories and non-mutually exclusive or exhaustive categories.

Ultimately, Stone even acknowledges that, “the dominance of numbers as a mode of describing public problems is only a recent, and perhaps temporary, phenomenon in cultural history- not the result of some underlying reality of numbers” (pg. 205). She further postulates

the political nature of applying numbers to policy issues in an attempt to better understand them. Though Birkland states, “but numbers are not entirely objective measures of phenomenon and are subject to interpretation. Numbers used in the portrayal of a problem are not always accurate” (2011, pg. 193).

In support of the NPF is the acknowledgement of the role of human community, ideology and motivation, like Stone (2012, pg. 11), we are in effect moving away from analyses built on the rational (market) model, and more towards a political community model and the struggle over ideas. NPF systematizes policy narratives and applies methodologies that aspire to produce falsifiable results. Going back and using Emery Roe’s Narrative Policy Analysis and conflict mediation may offer hope in times of intractable policy solutions, however, the groups must be willing to break down their policy stances and find a common solution. The NPF is aimed at intractable policy solutions primarily because they are so intractable, and because putting a number on specific literary elements may offer more legitimacy in the eyes of others within the research community.

The documents analyzed were archived within the UNR Special Collections and complete, thereby avoiding some of the disadvantages of using content analysis, minimizing the researcher reactive effect. Jones & McBeth (2010), in response to critiques from post-positivists who may believe narratives are subjective and beyond quantification, stress that researchers should anchor narratives in generalizable content like belief systems such as partisanship and ideology, or cultural theory to limit variability and increase the duplicative success (pg. 341).

As with any content analysis, weaknesses exist. Crow and Berggren (2014), along with recommendations for increasing the overall efficacy of the NPF, also point out that future NPF research needs higher document counts and more policy outcomes included in the mix. And, as

mentioned before, the NPF isn't used to determine the actual facts or truth of an issues, but a way to empirically look at how people are talking about their given issue. This means that while analyzing a particular issue, we actually may not be able to capture what is really occurring within the interested parties.

An additional area of weakness within this study and the chosen theoretical framework is the operationalization of terminology is not yet consistent across the literature, leaving the researcher to pour through extensive literature to create meaningful definitions. In order to contribute to the literature, I have borrowed hypotheses and operationalized definitions in line with other NPF studies in hopes of more consistency for further researchers. Utilizing the NPF in future research will provide researchers with valuable information about policy learning, group strategies, public discourse and much more. The value and rigor of this framework ultimately lies within the abilities of the researcher to clearly articulate his/her methodology and operationalize terms in a consistent manner.

NPF and application to the current land transfer debate.

In 2011, Western states once again took up the mantle of public land disposition and have created broad coalition awareness and support. Garnering public philosophical and political support has led land transfer advocates to create a policy narrative pushing for local control targeted not only at the general public, but political leaders as well. However, the arguments of transfer advocates have been essentially ignored on a federal policy level until the recent politically charged armed standoff in Burns, Oregon. It may be possible to better understand why group arguments continue to be ignored and how groups continue to evolve in terms of lobbyist tactics, communications, and funding, among other reasons.

Though there have been many calls for disposal over the years, recent events have bolstered State's rights activists' call for disposal and are also ripe for NPF analysis. The recent recession forced cutbacks in federal services and sent State and local representatives on a mission to find ways to balance their books with what they may have seen as underutilized public lands. The appeal of gas reserves alone on federal lands is enough to encourage vocal support for federal land turnover. In addition, during the recent government shut down in 2013, many national parks and other federal services were closed to tourists and local residents, an occurrence that appeared to have occurred only due to Washington politicking. Western state representatives from Utah and Arizona were able to provide short term funding to fully or partially open some of the parks within their states, parks that are often responsible for millions of dollars and are integral to local community economic health (Berkes, H. 2013). All of these issues are seemingly intractable, creating economic, social and political burdens on the groups that are involved with them.

As of this date, analysis of the use of economic (versus scientific) data by groups as a means to expand or contract a given issue appears to be lacking within NPF scholarship, so research within the policy realm is needed to more fully explore the importance and implications of using economic data in issues that are on the surface about natural resource policy. However, current economic wisdom suggests that much of these statements may have been based on "cowboy economics", instead of reality (Power & Barrett, 2001).

This data collection from 30 years ago may provide insight into how the current land transfer coalition is creating narratives and may with further analysis of current land transfer narratives, provide evidence of policy learning, though specific attention must be paid attention to equivalency issues that might exist between pre and post internet communications. Rooting

analysis within historical context, controlling for political and ideological beliefs, making methods completely clear and ensuring the differences and similarities between the two movements is explicit should ensure future efforts provide meaningful analysis. Comparisons between group strategies from the different time periods (Sagebrush Rebellion and the current land transfer debate), could reveal whether reliance on economic justification is consistent throughout the debate or if this is a political tactic that has been left behind.

Implications for action

In “Frame of Reflection”, Schon & Martin state that the “policy disputes we call controversies are immune to resolution by appeal to the facts” and that “disputes about such issues tend to be intractable, enduring and seldom finally resolved” (1994, pg.4), which speaks volumes about our current predicament in regards to public lands management. The current incarnation of the Sagebrush Rebellion, spearheaded by the American Lands Council, has moved beyond errant cattle and bulldozers to armed militants, increasingly divisive rhetoric, and financing from powerful interest groups.

Beyond the fundamental issues at stake here as represented by the two parties; principle, public lands, financial incentives, our national heritage, this intractable policy controversy can be seen as a threat to liberal democracy, as “society has limited capacity to manage policy contention” (Schon & Martin, 1994). Unfortunately, the issue was and is today framed around constitutional rights by land transfer advocates and, “if your dispute involves constitutional questions or revolves around the definition of basic rights, consensus may be unattainable. Braybooke & Lindblohm, in their book, “A Strategy of Decision”, (1963) also discuss just how difficult conflict resolution can be unless the two parties are willing to be flexible and honest not only the solution, but in defining the problem. The two parties must be

willing to reinvent, repackage and redefine their issue while working in concert with the opposition, or resolution may not be possible.

Process Strategies

Guided mediation and dispute resolution may provide the opposing parties an opportunity to uncover the root causes of this policy fight as a means to move forward, though determining just who gets to sit at the table at this national discussion without voices being marginalized is nearly impossible. Braybooke & Lindblohm did offer hope for such situations, even before the Rebellion took place (though applied in different policy arenas), in the form of mindful deliberation and careful construction of narratives by the interested groups. They “advocate a frame-reflective approach to policy practice, which would recognize the ability of practitioners to reflect on the frames that shape their conflicting positions and thereby foster a normative approach to public discourse within which public controversies are more likely to be resolved through reflective inquiry” (pg. 57).

Balint, Stewart, Desai and Walters, in their book, “Wicked environmental problems: Managing uncertainty and conflict, discuss how, “resolving complex problems in practice requires approaches that are (1) acceptable to all stakeholders, (2) practical to implement, (3) technically feasible, (4) economically sustainable, and (5) politically achievable” (2013, pg. 123). None of which are easily achieved and all of which require significant amounts of transparency, honesty and public participation. If land transfer and retention advocates were both willing and able to discuss the ownership of federal lands in a civil manner in order to make meaningful changes, resolution to this intractable policy decision could be a reality. Their decision approach for intractable policy issues could include Balint et al’s phases, as listed below (2013, pg. 130-133):

Discovery phase

- Scope: Identification of stakeholders to identify issues/problems/concerns
- Survey: Determine stakeholder preferences in respect to identified issues
- Reflect: Model a set of feasible situations based on survey

Deliberation phase

- Facilitate: Begin interact process of stakeholder discussion of possible scenarios
- Model: Discuss scenarios/outcomes from previous phase

Aggregation phase

- Focused discussion: Model and analyze a finite set of scenarios based on outcomes from previous phase
- Refine: Review scenarios as alternatives and go through the public involvement process (NEPA and DEIS for the Balint et al case)

Make a decision: Issue record of decision

Evaluation phase

- Experiment: Create small and large scale experiments related to decision
- Implement decision: Monitor results
- Refine model: Provide feedback to stakeholders, agree on revision policy

While these steps have been shown to work in other wicked policy situations, they would require a sincere effort on both sides in order to create lasting change. With Congress to refusing discuss the possibility of land transfers, as former President Reagan and Secretary Watts did with the Rebels, there has so far been very little meaningful back and forth discussion on a national scale between advocates for retention and disposal. Reagan and Watts may have ultimately been unable to transfer lands on a large-scale, but the Rebels were heard at the Executive level and the debate did reach across the nation. Ideally, in the future Congress would have to be a full partner in the deliberation process for this policy situation to move from debate to either action or dismissal. Dismissal, letting go of this issue, may prove difficult to parties who have fought for the transfer for so long and who are ideologically undisposed to accept anything but full transfer.

Recommendations for further research

“Human beings are storytelling animals”, (Jones, et al 2014, pg. 1) and our ability as humans to communicate, to persuade others to agree or disagree with different points of view

and agendas, is what makes this particular line of research an intriguing opportunity for future research.

In 2015, legislatures in seven western states—Utah, Arizona, Wyoming, New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, and Idaho— passed, introduced, or explored legislation demanding that the federal government turn over millions of acres of federal public lands to the states. These current groups have created narratives that in some respects mirror those of the Rebellion, but which, with further research, may reveal new elements that are reflective of policy learning and new political strategies. An additional point of interest includes the radicalization of opposition between the two parties (land transfer advocates and environmentalists) or the role of highly focused, ideologically motivated funders who may be increasing the intractability of highly contentious resource issues.

With ideologically divisive issues such as fracking, marijuana use, abortion, racial tensions, etc., there is cause to worry over citizens reaching critical mass, becoming overwhelmed with these seemingly impossible, intractable, policy issues. Analyzing group narrative may be a way to move these issues beyond their current intractability. Specific events and movements related to resources in the West that could potentially be analyzed using the NPF or other empirical means of inquiry include (but are not limited to) the current land transfer debate, marijuana sale and distribution, the relatively recent Klamath Basin, OR restoration agreement, public lands grazing fees, perceptions/realities, the Roadless Rule and citizen input, Clean Power Plan and drought policy, resolutions and issues.

Concluding remarks

Emiliano Zapata, whether classified as revolutionary or guerrilla, was known for his slogan “Land and Liberty” (Tierra y Libertad!) during the Mexican Revolution. That connection

between people and the land is still at stake in modern times and is at the root of this particular article over the disposal or retention of public lands. “Land and Liberty” could very well be used as a rallying cry for both the Rebels and the Environmentalists who see issues such as liberty and democracy inexorably linked with economic practicalities and actual physical space in the West.

In this dissertation I have attempted to define and operationalize narrative tools, to uncover specific themes used by the interest groups and ultimately to understand how it is that public lands, our common good, are so consistently under fire. The different groups were vocal, highly organized, and appeared sincere in their efforts to gain public support for their policy stances. And neither side seems to have waived in their ardent belief in how these public lands should be managed. Instead, current interest groups have grown more organized, more heavily financed and more sophisticated in their methods of communication. It is my hope that this dissertation study will shed light on why the current parties are unable to communicate and reach commonly agreed upon goals.

Appendix A

1. Does the narrative identify a specific winner (entity that benefits from a policy decision or potential decision)?

a. Yes (go to question #2)

b. No (skip to question #3)

2. What best describes how the narrative constructs the benefits of the policy decision?

a. The narrative is constructed as providing concentrated benefits (a few gain)

a) Who is it that gains? _____

b) What do they gain? _____

b. The narrative is constructed as providing diffused benefits (many gain)

a) Who is it that gains? _____

b) What do they gain? _____

3. Does the narrative identify a specific loser (entity that pays the costs) of a policy decision?

a. Yes (go to question #4)

b. No (skip to question #5)

4. What best describes how the narrative constructs the costs of the policy decision?

a. The narrative is constructed as providing concentrated costs (a few pay)

a) Who is it that pays? _____

b) What do they lose? _____

b. The narrative is constructed as providing diffused costs (the many pay)

a) Who is it that pays? _____

b) What do they lose? _____

5 Does the narrative contain at least one symbol? The definition of a symbol is a word or phrase that “shrinks and reduces complicated concepts into simple, manageable, or memorable form” using metaphors, colorful language, or condensation symbols.

a. Yes,

a) list and identify paragraph (s).

b) What is the symbol? _____

b. No

6. Does the narrative use a policy surrogate? A policy surrogate is defined as “a strategy wherein simple policy debates are presented as a surrogate to larger, more controversial issues”.

a. Yes,

a) list and identify paragraph(s).

b). What is the issue being used as a policy surrogate for?

b. No

7. Does the narrative use scientific or technical data to define a problem or its solutions?

a. Yes (go to question #8)

b. No (got to question #10)

8. What type(s) of science? Determine which type or types, briefly describe why, and list the paragraph or paragraphs.

a. Biological

c. Physical

b. Economic

d. Social

9. Is the mention of science used in the context of?
 - a. Disputing science
 - b. Establishing scientific certainty
 - c. Other (please describe)

10. What is the stance of the narrative towards the policy being discussed?
 - a. Winning (supports the policy environment and actions discussed in the narrative)
 - b. Losing (the group is under attack even if they are partially winning)

11. Does narrative place blame?
 - a. Yes
 - a. List the paragraph or paragraphs
 - b. On whom? _____
 - b. No

12. Is there evidence of the devil/angel shift? The devil/angel shift is defined as a relational phenomenon wherein actors exaggerate the malicious motives, behaviors, and influence of opponents, conversely, the angel shifts is a tendency for actors to exaggerate the power and virtues of their allies.
 - a. Yes there is evidence of the devil/angel shift.
 - a) Briefly describe_____
 - b) List paragraphs
 - b. No.

13. What best describes the primary victim or victims in the narrative?
 - a. nature, wildlife, ecosystems; list paragraphs
 - b. anthropomorphic or human concerns (economy, recreation); list paragraphs
 - c. Quality of life, spirituality; list paragraphs
 - d. No victims identified.

14. Is there an appeal to principle? i.e. state's rights? Fairness?
 - a. Yes.
 - a) Describe _____
 - b) list paragraphs
 - b. No

15. Is there evidence of the New/Old West point of view? Simplistically defined as a "value clash between 'cappuccino' community environmental values (conservation; intrinsic value of the environment) and that of the 'cowboy' communities (extractive use of resources; human dominion over the environment)" (Rengert and Lang 2001).
 - a. Yes
 - a) how is this view manifested? b) list paragraphs
 - b. No

16. Do you have any comments about the text or the coding process that could be important to the analysis? If so list below.

Appendix B

| # ⁷ | Code name in Atlas.ti (in alphabetical order) | Definition | Example | Total documents with code | Total occurrences ⁸ | # of Occurrences, Rebels | # of Occurrences, Environmentalists |
|----------------|---|---|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Angel | Use of the angel code shows where a group has highlighted and possibly over-emphasized the good, well intentioned behavior of (typically their own) a party in the situation. | <p>“those of us who use the public lands understand in our hearts the personal strength we gain from the integrity of this land” (PD, 26)</p> <p>“As the United States enter their third century, the Western states are emerging as the leaders and the forward moving people of the</p> | 29 | 38 | 18 | 20 |

⁷ Citations for the examples can be found in Appendix B

⁸ Total occurrences differ from total documents as each instance of the theme that was separate and distinct from a previous use of the theme was coded separately. Thus, there may be more occurrences than documents.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--|---|----|-----|----|----|
| | | | greatest nation on earth” (PD,312) | | | | |
| 2 | Blame | Strategy where blame for the situation is put directly on someone or some entity e.g. BLM | “Our most difficult task is to cut through the political posturing and dissembling arguments of special interest groups” (PD, 79) | 87 | 101 | 56 | 45 |
| 3 | Comparison: East vs West | Situation where a comment is made on the differences in how eastern and western land policies are. | “Unlike eastern states which were admitted to the union with state or private control over the land within their borders, western public land states were treated like second-class colonies” (PD, 326) | 23 | 23 | 20 | 3 |
| 4 | Constitution is being violated | Belief that the constitution is being violated with the current situation. | “Nevada has a strong constitutional position to get back the public lands because the U.S. Constitution says the lands are to be held in trust | 14 | 22 | 22 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|-----|-----|----|----|
| | | | for the states and all states are to be treated equally” (PD, 287) | | | | |
| 5 | Devil (villains) | Actors are likely to overemphasize the bad intentions and power of their opponents while underemphasizing their own powers and influence. | In regards to Wilderness designations on public lands, “this fact alone shows the belligerent discriminatory actions of the BLM”. (PD, 336) | 97 | 149 | 79 | 70 |
| 6 | Economic justification ⁹ | Instances where the narrator uses monetary reasons to support their point of view | Referencing the passage of SB#398, “it will open up our vast resources to development rather than restriction and stagnation; it will broaden our | 142 | 165 | 84 | 81 |

⁹ *Economic justification, victims, policy surrogate and science/nature all have been condensed here as noted in Chapter 3.

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|--|--|----|-----|----|----|
| | | | economic base and increase our economic autonomy” (PD, 35) | | | | |
| 7 | Equity and fairness | Policy stance that the resolution is required to ensure states and citizens are treated equally. | “We in Nevada have been aware of the economic inequities and hardships suffered by the state” (PD, 87) | 13 | 13 | 11 | 2 |
| 8 | New West | Includes references to environmental organizations, in-migrants, urban access, new recreation on public lands, etc. | “today millions of city residents spend weekends, if not weeks, camping on public lands” (PD, 440) | 39 | 47 | 24 | 23 |
| 9 | Old West | Includes references to cowboy and ranching culture, mining and other extractive industries and those who work them, historical and traditional uses of the land. | “The fact is, the miners have been drygulched [sic], the cowboys ambushed and the sheepherders bushwacked..” (PD, 495) | 77 | 105 | 45 | 60 |
| 10 | Policy stance-Environment | Policy stance that as a result of | “Nevada lack [sic] expertise | 10 | 11 | 0 | 14 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|--|---|----|----|----|----|
| | will be hurt | private or state ownership, the public lands will be degraded in some fashion. | and concern for natural resources to manage the land properly” (PD, 9) | | | | |
| 111 | Policy stance- Environment will be improved with state ownership | Policy stance that as a result of private or state ownership, the public lands will be improved in some fashion. | “I believe states will make better caretakers of our national environment as well” (PD, 31) | 9 | 10 | 9 | 1 |
| 12 | Policy stance: Keep public access to public lands | Policy stance that even if the lands change ownership, the public will still be allowed to access public lands | “The State of Nevada will not only agree to honor all existing access routes to and over public lands, but it will also be developing a program to provide better access over private lands to get to public lands” (PD, 132) | 18 | 20 | 16 | 4 |
| 16 | Policy stance: Lands belong to everyone | Policy stance that these lands are public, owned by the taxpayers, and as such everyone owns them and | “I believe the public lands were meant to be used by everyone” (PD, 329) | 16 | 16 | 0 | 16 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|----|----|---|----|
| | | the land should then not be put into state or private ownership. | | | | | |
| 13 | Policy stance: Public access to lands will be denied | Policy stance that the public will be denied access to public lands once ownership changes hands. | “The public will lose access to public lands for hunting, fishing and general recreation activities”, (PD, 9) | 17 | 20 | 0 | 20 |
| 14 | Policy stance: Recreation will be affected negatively | Policy stance that people will not be able to recreate in the same amount or in the same way on the public lands under new ownership. | “The recent session of the Nevada legislature saw two more attempts to dispose of public lands, either of which would have an enormous adverse effect on outdoor recreation in Nevada” (PD, 36) | 12 | 16 | 0 | 16 |
| 15 | Policy stance: Recreation will increase with state ownership | Policy stance that people will be able to recreate more often and in better ways as a result of new | “The State of Nevada....will be developing a program to provide better access over | 3 | 3 | 3 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|------------------------------|--|--|----|----|----|----|
| | | ownership. | private lands to get to public lands” (PD, 132) | | | | |
| 16 | Policy stance: state control | Policy stance that states should have ultimate control of these lands. With this code, there was no justification (recreation, economics, etc.), just the notion that the states should control these lands. | “In those states that have land now under state control, comparisons showed the states generally managed the lands better” (PD, 5) | 7 | 13 | 12 | 1 |
| 17 | Policy surrogate | This narrative tool is used when a party is purportedly discussing one issue i.e. land policy, and is in actuality discussing another i.e. | “The Western States right of self- government, freedom, and equality is the issue at hand and not a Sagebrush Rebellion” (PD, 336) | 15 | 15 | 9 | 6 |
| 22 | Principle | Related to ideas of freedom, destiny, state’s rights and fundamental moral beliefs. | “Nevada will have a valid claim to the land that is rightfully the property of this state and its | 55 | 67 | 44 | 23 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|----|----|----|----|
| | | | people” (PD, 111) | | | | |
| 18 | Q of L (Quality of Life) | Reference to quality of life as being affected by new ownership of lands, may be either positive or negative, depending on context | “Federal land watersheds give Westerners good water and electric power, and their clean air contributes greatly to the special Western quality of life” (PD, 45) | 10 | 8 | 2 | 6 |
| 19 | Resources are not being properly exploited | Economic descriptor and belief that under federal ownership, commodities on public lands are not being properly exploited. | “Once again, federal land policies are counterproductive to the discovery and development of mineral deposits” (PD, 31) | 9 | 9 | 9 | 0 |
| 20 | Scientific certainty/nature observations | Scientific (biological, geographical, physical) data and observations are provided to support policy stance. | “of the 700 million acres at stake, 400 million are classified as wildlife habitat...” (PD, 89) | 16 | 16 | 4 | 12 |
| 21 | Symbol | Devices used to describe the issue | “We are not serfs in a fief | 19 | 23 | 15 | 8 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|---|----|----|----|----|
| | | at hand by using a descriptive, metaphorical, phrase to describe the actual phrase. | controlled by the landed gentry of the federal agencies” (PD, 366) | | | | |
| 22 | Unfair practice: federal government | Belief that the federal government is acting unfairly to the narrator’s party | “A major consideration is disposition of California water, a grim life and death matter for farmers and ranchers, but now according to some, handled in a preemptory and cavalier manner by Washington administrators” (PD, 35) | 15 | 19 | 18 | 1 |
| 23 | Victims | Humans, the environment, principles are being hurt whether it be financially, psychically, or directly by the current policy or if the current policy were to change | “An attempt is being made to hornswaggle all Americans out of a unique land heritage” (PD, 45) | 57 | 69 | 38 | 31 |
| 24 | Waste | Public is not | “The Sagebrush | 8 | 13 | 10 | 3 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|----------|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| | | aware of how resources are being wasted by having these lands in the public domain; mineral, oil, vegetation, etc. | Rebellion is very likely to persist as long as federal management inefficiencies and waste..." (PD, 18) | | | | |
| 25 | Win/Few | With this code, the group believes that if the policy change does occur, few will actually benefit (concentrated benefits). | "Large ranchers and mining companies would probably be the major beneficiaries if the State gains control of public lands" (PD, 93) | 18 | 18 | 3 | 15 |
| 26 | Win/Many | Policy story where it is believed that many will benefit from the change in policy (benefits will be diffuse). | "We ask Non-Westerners to join us for the benefit of all" (PD, 87) | 35 | 43 | 37 | 6 |

Appendix C
List of Primary Documents (PD) for Appendix B

- PD, 5: Elko Daily Free Press (Ed.). (1981, January 9). '81 Should be a good year for Sagebrush Rebellion. *Elko Daily Free Press*. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-04/30.
- PD, 9: Author Unknown. (n.d) "A report on the Artemesia revolt, aka The Sagebrush Rebellion". Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 87-04/10/32a
- PD, 26: Shanks, B. (1982, April 27). "James Watt: The West's trillion dollar pirate". Presented to the Utah Wilderness Association, Salt Lake Town Meeting. Salt Lake City, Utah. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 87-04/10/2.
- PD, 31: Santini, J. (1981, February 25). "Santini supports Sagebrush Rebellion". *Battle Mountain Bugle*. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-04/30.
- PD, 35: Committee to Restore the Constitution Bulletin. (February, 1981). "Report to general assembly recommends state ownership of federal lands". Fort Collins, CO. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-09/16.
- PD, 36: Young, C. (1983, June). "They are after our land again!". Great Basin Reporter, Nevada Wildlife Federation, volume 1, no 3, pp. 1,8. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-04/19.
- PD, 45: Andrus, C. (n.d). "Sagebrush Rebellion would fence out majority". *Rocky Mountain News*.
- PD, 79: Rhoads, D. "The necessity of a Sagebrush Rebellion". Speech text. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-04/14.
- PD, 87: Glaser, N. (n.d.). "Does America need a revolution?" Speech text. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-04/14.
- PD, 89: Lynch, D. (1980, December 15). "GOP victory reignites Sagebrush Rebellion". *The Oregonian*. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 87-04/10/27.
- PD, 111: Elko Daily Free Press (Ed.). (1979, April 11). "Black Nevada picture is about to change". Elko Daily Free Press. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-09/16.
- PD, 132: Nevada Legislature's Select Committee on Public Lands (1979, December 3). "The Sagebrush Rebellion". *Elko Independent*. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-04/3/36.

- PD, 803: Orahood, H. (1981, February 20). "It's time to stomp on Sagebrush Rebellion". *The Denver Post*. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department box 82-61/10/3B
- PD, 287: Las Vegas Review Journal (Ed.). (1977, March 29). "When will Nevada own Nevada's land?". *Las Vegas Review Journal*, pg. 16. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department box 85-04/16.
- PD, 326: Santini, J. (1981, April 31). Letter to Ms. Kim Chapman. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 82-61/18.
- PD, 329: Santini, J. (1981, June 16). Letter to Mr. John Branton, News Editor, Forks Forum – Peninsula Herald. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 82-61/18.
- PD, 336: Pringle, E. (1980, August 20). "A comment on the Sagebrush Rebellion". *Lovelock Review*. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-04/31.
- PD, 366: Author unknown. (1981, January 28-29). Montana Cattlemen's Association Annual Meeting, Speech Text. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-04/14.
- PD, 440: Author unknown. (n.d.). "Presentation on state land ownership claim in Nevada". Speech text. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 89-3/36.
- PD, 495: Author unknown. (n.d.). "Sagebrush Rebellion and tax relief". Speech text. Retrieved from UNR Special Collections Department Folder 85-04/14.

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Curriculum Vitae

Amber Overholser

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(775) 934.2923

Academic History

- 2016 PhD Public Affairs School of Environmental and Public Affairs. University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Dissertation Topic: “An Examination of Sagebrush Rebellion Communications Using Narrative Policy Framework”
- 2009 M.S. Administration. Central Michigan University. (Overholser, Amber, 2009, Thesis: “Recruiting and retaining volunteers for international student exchange programs”, Elko, NV)
- 2004 B.A. Integrative and Professional Studies Great Basin College
- 1999 AA, Liberal Arts and Certificate in Fisheries management, College of Southern Idaho

Courses Taught

PUA 703 Seminar in Organizational Theory, (co-teaching in-person, Spring 2016 semester)
PUA 498 Independent study: Public lands: History, policy and uses (in person)
PUA 440 Intergovernmental Relations (online)
PUA 425 Public Budgeting and Finance (online)
PUA 420 Public Personnel Administration (online)
PUA 405 Public Organizations (online)
PUA 403 Risk Management in the Public and Non-Profit Sectors (online)
PUA 250 State and Local Government Administration (online)
PUA 241 Introduction to Public Administration (online)
GSC 100 First Year Experience (in person)

Courses Developed

PUA 498: Public Lands: History, policy and uses (Independent Study)
PUA 420: Public Personnel administration

Refereed Conference presentations

- April, 2016 (accepted). Sustained and engaged Volunteerism: A case study of the campaign to create Tule Springs National Monument. Planned presentation at West Coast Data Conference.
- April, 2016 (accepted). Tule Springs and Basin and Range: A tale of two monuments. Planned presentation at the Western Social Science's 2016 conference.
- March, 2016 (accepted). "An Examination of Sagebrush Rebellion Communications Using Narrative Policy Framework: Results". Planned presentations at the Southwest Social Sciences Association and Graduate Student Symposium (two conferences).
- February, 2016. Shared geography and family memories. Presentation at the Far West Popular Culture Association's 2016 conference.
- September, 2015. Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association Conference: Community based education programs as tools for coalition success: A case study of the campaign to create Tule Springs National Monument.
- April, 2015. Western Social Sciences Association 57th Conference, "An Examination of Public Land Interest Group Communications Using Narrative Policy Framework: Initial Results".
- April, 2015. SEPA Department student poster presentation, "An Examination of Public Land Interest Group Communications Using Narrative Policy Framework: Initial Results".
- March, 2015. Graduate Student Symposium, "An Examination of Public Land Interest Group Communications Using Narrative Policy Framework: Initial Results".

Under Review

- Overholser, A. (2016). Sustained and engaged Volunteerism: A case study of the campaign to create Tule Springs National Monument. Currently in preparation for submission to the International Journal of Volunteer Administration.

Works in Progress

- Overholser, Amber (2016) Solitary Action. [Review of the book] *Solitary Action* by Ira J. Cohen (2016). Oxford University Press.
- Overholser, Amber (2016). Déjà vu all over again: An examination of Sagebrush Rebellion and current land transfer advocate communications". Will submit for publication to Policy Studies Journal.

Works in Progress, continued

Overholser, Amber (2016). Qualitative research methods in non-profit research: In preparation for submission to 13th Annual West Coast Data Conference

Overholser, Amber, et.al. (2016-2017). Tule Springs National Monument: A history. For submission to University of Nevada Press (currently creating book proposal).

Certificates, honors

2016, Current participant, Graduate College Research Certificate

2016, Current participant, Graduate College Teaching Certificate

2015, Certificate of completion, The Art and Science of Teaching Online

2014, Graduate Assistant of the Year, School of Environmental and Public Affairs

2014, Graduate, Nevada Naturalist Program

2011, Graduate, Elko Area Leadership

2007, Graduate, NEW Leadership Nevada

2003, BAIPS Student of the Year

Professional Service Activities

Member, Western Social Science Association

Member, Southwestern Social Science Association

Member, Midwest Political Science Association

Member, Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association

Reviewing

Nonprofit Management & Leadership (will begin as soon as they have articles for me, 2016)

Employment history

2012- Present, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV

Graduate Assistant. Teach courses online with WebCampus program on various subjects.

Review and revise courses to match course objectives, updating assignments to ensure relevance.

Converse with students in need of further instruction, create formal assessments to test student knowledge, grade assignments and work with Graduate Coordinator on student outcomes and behaviors.

Jan 2010- 2012, Communities in Schools, Elko, NV

Program Coordinator. Coordination of Hunger and tele-health counseling program and various initiatives all aimed at empowering students to stay in school and achieve in life throughout Elko County. Consistently raised outputs while lowering expenses. In partnership with governmental

agencies, researched and provided a case for support of a local health authority. Coordinate volunteers, lead outreach activities and provide other programmatic support as needed.

Farmers Market Manager. Coordinated small farmers market for small business committee in Elko, NV. Contacted vendors, prepared marketing materials and managed operations on market day.

2006-2008, Great Basin College, Elko, Nevada.

Retention Coordinator. Focus of position was to increase student success and persistence.

Worked with students individually and in group settings to reach their goals. *Foundation*

Foundation Services Coordinator. Data entry and reconciliation of donations, pledges and pledge payments weekly. Prepared and disseminated monthly pledge statements to donors. Assisted other departments with accounting for various fund-raising activities.

2004-2006, R.D.O. Equipment Co., Phoenix, Arizona

Rental Coordinator/Service Writer. Coordinated the movement of large rental fleet, ensured accuracy of billing. Managed John Deere novelty merchandise; monitored inventory, ordered product. Worked closely with service and parts departments in customer service and billing. Completed cycle counts and collected from past-due customers.

Volunteer Service record

2015, Participant, Sage Grouse Service Learning Project, Bodie Hills, CA

2014, Nevada Naturalist Program participant and volunteer

2014, Embedded Volunteer, Central Asian Water Group Visit, World Affairs Council Las Vegas

2013, Public-Private Partnerships, Session designed for visiting Haitian dignitaries. World Affairs Council, Las Vegas.

2013, Adult Literacy Tutor, Community Multi-Cultural Center (closed due to lack of funding)

2013-2011, Red Cross Response Volunteer

2011, Ruby Mountain Film Festival, volunteer

2009-2011, ASSE International student exchange program, host mother and community representative

2006-2008, Great Basin College, Member of the Intellectual and Cultural Enrichment committee

2004, United States Peace Corps, Samarqand, Uzbekistan, health extensionist

2003, AmeriCorps* VISTA, Elko, Nevada, health volunteer, indirect services