The War Extension Rhetoric: An Analogic Criticism of U.S. Presidential Rhetoric During the Iraq and Philippine-American Wars

Antonio Lambino II

Studies on U.S. presidential war rhetoric tend to ignore the dimension of time, i.e., most focus analysis on the inception of war. In reality, however, many wars are protracted and may last beyond initial public expectations. War messages are therefore employed not only to seek congressional and public support for the inception, but also for the extension of armed conflict abroad. Using the methodology of analogic criticism, this study provides seminal ideas for what it calls the "war rhetoric of extension." By comparing Bush's speeches during the current Iraq War and McKinley/Roosevelt's annual messages during the Philippine-American War, this paper argues that the war rhetoric of extension has the following characteristics: similar patterns of argumentation, epideictic statements that elevate American prestige, and paternalistic language.

Keywords: war rhetoric, Iraq War, Philippine-American War, presidential rhetoric, analogic criticism

Take up the White Man's burden—
In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple,
A hundred times made plain
To seek another's profit,
And work another's gain.

- *Rudyard Kipling* (1899)

Introduction

This paper provides seminal ideas and presents textual evidence for a subgenre of presidential war rhetoric that arises when commanders-in-chief of the United States of America find it necessary to publicly justify the continuation

of wars waged overseas. The arguments put forth regarding this subgenre are based on Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson's (1990: chap. 6) generic analysis of presidential war rhetoric found in the book entitled ***Deeds Done in Words***.

As constructed by Campbell and Jamieson, the generic criteria apply to situations in which presidents seek to bolster support from the U.S. Congress and the American public either close to or soon after the beginning of a military conflict overseas. I refer to this as "war initiation rhetoric." In contrast, this paper hopes to consider generic similarities and differences when presidential war rhetoric attempts to garner support for the continuation of military engagement abroad after substantial time has passed from the conflict's inception. Since this latter type of presidential rhetoric exhibits most of the generic criteria of the former to substantial degrees, I conceptualize it as a subgenre and call it the "war rhetoric of extension." I argue that this subgenre has three rhetorical characteristics. First, presidents follow similar patterns of argumentation for the war's extension: (1) they praise U.S. military personnel; (2) they claim support from the occupied country's population; and (3) they assert that an indefinite time frame is justified for waging a successful military campaign. Second, after making these deliberative arguments, the presidents pivot toward epideictic statements that seek to elevate American prestige. Third, the language used denotes a paternalistic relationship between the U.S. and other countries.

The subgenre will be constructed primarily through analogic rhetorical criticism by comparing and contrasting speeches of George W. Bush in defense of continued American engagement in the Iraq War and William McKinley's and Theodore Roosevelt's annual messages arguing for sustained military commitment in the Philippine-American War of 1899-1902.

Although Iraq has been most frequently compared to Vietnam and the Cold War in the mainstream U.S. mass media, a few incisive pieces draw convincing analogies between the current war in Iraq and the one waged in the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century (e.g., Ignatieff, 2003; Niskanen, 2004; Nurnberger, 2004). Although U.S. academic sources predominantly call the latter the Philippine Insurrection (e.g., Holsti, 2001; Gatewood, 1975; Shealey, 1969), this paper refers to it as the Philippine-American War.

The comparative arguments between Iraq and the Philippines revolve around issues pertaining to sovereign self-rule versus American intervention, imperialism, and neocolonialism. Based on this set of comparative claims, this paper will juxtapose Bush's and McKinley's/Roosevelt's rhetorical arguments regarding the Iraq War and Philippine-American War, respectively. The overall objective of carrying out this

analogic analysis is to explore the hypothesis that a subgenre in war rhetoric exists when a U.S. president seeks to justify continuing military engagement in armed conflict abroad that has extended beyond initial expectations.

For combatants and civilians alike, war is literally a life and death matter (Campbell & Jamieson, 1990: 105). In the U.S., as in other democratic societies, it is imperative that citizens, who ultimately carry the weight of war's burdens, understand the rhetorical processes and sociopolitical conditions under which armed conflicts operate. This paper hopes to contribute to past efforts made toward increased understanding in this vital area.

Analytical Framework: Analogic Criticism

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (1990) broadly define war rhetoric as executive messages "in which presidents seek to justify to the Congress and to the citizenry their exercise of war powers" (101). They consider instances of presidential discourse that occur either before or shortly after foreign military operations commence and assert that this type of presidential discourse has five generic properties, namely:

(1) every element in it proclaims that the momentous decision to resort to force is deliberate, the product of thoughtful consideration; (2) forceful intervention is justified through a chronicle or narrative from which argumentative claims are made; (3) the audience is exhorted to unanimity of purpose and total commitment; (4) the rhetoric not only justifies the use of force but also seeks to legitimate presidential assumption of the extraordinary powers of the commander in chief; and, as a function of these other characteristics, (5) strategic misrepresentations play an unusually significant role in its appeals. Each of these characteristics helps presidents recast situations of conflict in terms that legitimate their initiatives, usually as entailed in the executive's constitutional right to defend the nation. (Campbell & Jamieson, 1990: 105)

These generic criteria hold for Bush's war rhetoric of initiation in Iraq, as well as for past American foreign military interventions in other parts of the world. Claiming that generic criteria hold in various contexts begs the question of how a genre is constructed. According to Campbell and Jamieson (1990), comparing various forms of presidential rhetoric suggests "... an implicit understanding that each type is somehow distinct, with identifiable features and purposes... (codified in) genres defined by their pragmatic ends and typified by

their substantive, stylistic, and strategic similarities" (6-7). The method these authors employed entails comparing and contrasting texts and categorizing them into genres of presidential discourse, such as inaugurals, veto messages, and directly relevant to this study, war rhetoric.

This paper argues that a subgenre of war rhetoric, the "war rhetoric of extension," can be supported through analogic rhetorical criticism. It is thus necessary to lay out the limitations of the method and explain why this mode of analysis was nevertheless chosen.

Serious issues have been raised against analogic criticism. William Benoit (1995) describes a failed attempt at generic construction through analogic criticism carried out by Rosenfield, who compared two speeches (one by Nixon and another by Truman) to define apologetic discourse and found four similar characteristics. According to Benoit, the resulting genre of *apologia* did not gain wide recognition because it focused on structural elements and failed to account for specific characteristics directly relevant to presidential discourse (i.e., content of the speeches). Campbell also undermined Rosenfield's attempt at analogic criticism by "persuasively argu(ing) that it is unwise to develop a genre on the basis of an analog of but two instances" (1983, as quoted by Benoit, 1995: 11).

Criticism notwithstanding, "if the use of a particular genre… proves illuminating, provides insights otherwise unavailable," then the truth in the critical insight generated "… holds until a better argument is made" (Campbell & Jamieson, 1990: 8). This paper uses analogic criticism on a limited number of examples because doing side-by-side textual comparison is a necessary, albeit insufficient, exercise in conceptualizing genre and generating insight. In evaluating Rosenfield's work, Benoit (11) concedes that the use of analogic criticism led to a "useful beginning," which is the main analytical objective of this paper.

Since the genre of war rhetoric has already been constructed and defended by Campbell and Jamieson, this paper intends to make a limited and tentative claim: a particular type of rhetorical situation (i.e., extension of armed engagement abroad) provides exigencies for common generic deviations (i.e., war rhetoric of extension characteristics) from the established genre. Should the subgenre constructed in this paper endure critical scrutiny, it offers to scholars an additional way in which they may carry out analogic criticism, by identifying and codifying deviations in established genres of discourse. More importantly, this study could lead to an improved understanding of the forms and uses of presidential rhetoric when wars waged overseas have lasted beyond initial expectations.

Having chosen an analytical framework and having taken stock of its main criticisms, it is also important to discuss a particular rhetorical move

and its implications in carrying out analogic criticism of the war rhetoric of extension. Kathleen Hall Jamieson (1988) explains how "eloquent persons skillfully use synechdochic phrases to ground discourse, forestall debate, and characterize themselves and the institutions for which they speak" (91). Conversely, a synoptic phrase can lead to problematic rhetorical situations. Jamieson argues that a "… rhetor who creates a compelling synoptic phrase is, in some senses, its prisoner. The phrase may stand, for example, as a standard by which to judge success or failure…" (98). For instance, Jamieson cites the way in which Woodrow Wilson described World War I as a "war to end all wars." When Wilson's statement was falsified by World War II, it became an unattained benchmark and a liability to his administration's legacy. Moreover, synoptic phrases can rhetorically constrain presidents to the point of pursuing previously stated policies regardless of changed contexts and strong arguments in support of policy changes. I will argue in the concluding section that the Bush administration had become particularly vulnerable to this predicament.

Iraq and the Philippines: Contextual Similarities and Implications for Analogic Criticism

Scholars have detailed convincing analogies between the Iraq War and past U.S. military engagements abroad. Iraq has probably been most often compared to the Vietnam War in the mainstream mass media by those opposed to current U.S. military intervention in the Middle East. In contrast, positive comparisons have been made between the War on Terror (which subsumes the Iraq War), on the one hand, and the Cold War, on the other, even by President Bush himself (2005, November 11). These comparisons to Vietnam and the Cold War are used by proponents and opponents of the Bush Administration's policies in Iraq because they are widely held to be symbolic of U.S. military failure and success, respectively.

However, insightful pieces have also found commonalities between the current Iraq War and the Philippine-American War of 1899-1902. According to Ralph Nurnberger of Georgetown University, although the "Philippine Insurrection and Iraq are different wars, fought more than a century apart… there are striking similarities. In both, after initial 'conventional' military phases against declared enemies were 'over', far bloodier struggles ensued and each became a political battleground" (2003). William Niskanen of the Cato Institute likewise claims that "America's first experience of a relatively 'easy' war followed by an extended period of guerilla combat was not in Iraq, it was a century ago in the Philippines" (2004, para. 1). Harvard professor and human rights scholar Michael Ignatieff claims that "The Iraq operation most resembles

the conquest of the Philippines… (in that) both were wars of conquest, both were urged by an ideological elite on a divided country and both cost much more than anyone had bargained for" (2003, 71). The above-quoted scholars agree on particular details regarding the two wars. In the Philippines, (1) the formal war was quickly prosecuted by Commodore Dewey, (2) prior to the Battle of Manila Bay, the Filipino insurgents had been largely successful in defeating the Spanish colonial forces before the Americans were involved, (3) a protracted Filipino guerilla resistance against the U.S. followed, and (4) of around 120,000 U.S. military personnel sent to the Philippines, more or less 4,000 were killed. In Iraq, (1) the formal war against the Hussein regime was quickly prosecuted by General Franks, (2) an Iraqi guerrilla insurgency against the U.S. followed (with foreign fighters from neighboring countries joining the armed resistance movement (71), and (3) a large number of Americans have been killed on the ground. According to the Iraq Coalition Casualty Count (2009), there have been more than 4,300 reported U.S. deaths in Iraq as of September 27, 2009.

Based on my reading of the Bush, McKinley, and Roosevelt pieces selected for this study, I found two additional similarities; credible opposition arose after a substantial amount of time had passed from the conflict's inception and ill-treatment of foreigners was reported in the news media. Public arguments made by the Bush administration and military leaders regarding the imprudence of a U.S. pullout from Iraq echo McKinley and Roosevelt's positions on the Philippine question at the turn of the twentieth century. Contrastingly, the most credible opponents of the two conflicts raise divergent concerns. Democratic Congressman John Murtha's negative opinions (Hersh, 2005) do not mirror the positions of William Jennings Bryan (**New York Times**, 1899) and the Anti-Imperialist League (**New York Times**, 1898). While Murtha decried the lack of a clear strategy in Iraq, Bryan and the league argued that giving the Philippines its independence was a natural consequence of upholding the principles on which the U.S. was founded. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw the analogy that at a certain point after the commencement of hostilities, politically powerful and prestigious members of American society spoke up against both wars.

There is another argument with regard to opposition to these wars: ill-treatment of the foreigners. According to Miller (1982), American soldiers were writing home from the Philippines, describing atrocities committed against Filipino combatants and civilians. Over time, these descriptions diffused to a national U.S. audience as anti-imperialist editors put them in print (189). We can claim a high-tech analog in the pictures taken of prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib in Iraq (Ivie, 2004). Moreover, we have experienced how firsthand accounts of war atrocities make it to the mainstream media, whether in traditional print or new visual image formats.

Based on the foregoing comparisons, the following assertions may be made. First, rhetorical situations arise when wars extend beyond expectations, as oppositionists are given sufficient time and ammunition to build and publicize coherent arguments. Corollary to this, I hypothesize that for both wars, opposition increased after the rally-'round-the-flag' effect (Berry, 1990; Nacos, 1990) had begun to subside. Second, in response to emerging rhetorical situations, McKinley, Roosevelt, and Bush shifted their argumentation strategies, which then revised the generic template of presidential war rhetoric. These revisions comprise key features of the subgenre and will be discussed in detail in the subsequent section.

While the rise of a credible opposition is true of other foreign military engagements (e.g., Vietnam and Korea), it is nevertheless important to state here the existence of opposition toward the Iraq and Philippine Wars because the availability of counterarguments in the public sphere is essential to deliberation and debate. Moreover, in a future comparative analysis, it may be found that presidential war rhetoric in the context of other protracted wars also display characteristics of the war rhetoric of extension.

It is essential at this point to provide a cautionary note. I do not mean to overstate the analogies. After all, the Iraq and Philippine Wars are more than a century apart and occur in very different global, regional, and national contexts. In what seems to be an extreme comparison of Bush's and Hitler's rhetoric, Robert Ivie stresses that "(a)nalogies are never identities and can be misleading if they are taken as such" (2004: para. 26). It goes without saying that the wars in Iraq and the Philippines have many differences. What I attempt to argue in this paper is that there are enough similarities between the two to carry out sound analogic criticism and provide evidence that a subgenre of presidential war rhetoric exists.

I argue that the subgenre's existence is supported if the similarities in these examples of presidential rhetoric persist despite the differences that chronology poses. Furthermore, our examples of Bush's rhetoric were orally delivered, while the examples from McKinley and Roosevelt were submitted to the U.S. Congress in written form. The difference in medium, the difference in time periods, and the distant geographic locations circumstantially, and only circumstantially, control for medium-, temporal-, and location-specific rhetorical peculiarities. In addition, Roosevelt, who acceded to the presidency while the Filipino-American War was in progress, employed the same rhetorical moves as McKinley. Given that we have examples from different presidents for the same war, we find more circumstantial evidence for the construction of the subgenre.

The War Extension Rhetoric

In this section, I will now make comparisons between the rhetoric of George W. Bush during the Iraq War, on one hand, and William McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt during the Philippine-American War, on the other.

Bush's speeches (November 11 and 30, 2005; January 31, 2006) justifying American military operation in Iraq were selected based on the judgment that they were responding to increasing domestic criticisms that were gaining traction in American society. UCSB's ***The American Presidency Project*** web archive was used to search for McKinley's and Roosevelt's messages dealing with the Philippine-American War. The only available texts that argued for the legitimacy of U.S. presence in the Philippines and that responded to criticisms were annual messages from 1899, 1900, and 1901.

Since the duration of the war in Iraq has gone well beyond the war waged in the Philippines, the speeches of Bush included for analysis have been limited to those made until 2006. This mirrors the three-year time frame of the Philippine-American War. These examples of presidential discourse were made after substantial time had passed (at least a year) from the inception of both the Iraq and the Philippine-American Wars. Comparing and contrasting these speeches will draw out unique rhetorical features of the "war rhetoric of extension" subgenre.

If one uses Campbell and Jamieson's (1990, chap. 6) generic template for war rhetoric as the model, Bush's speeches and McKinley and Roosevelt's written messages fulfill most of the generic criteria. The speeches and annual messages exhort the audience toward national purpose and claim extraordinary power for the executive to continue prosecuting the war. The constructed narratives balance positive democratization storylines with the portrayal of insurgents as evil people with nothing but selfish motivations. The need to cast American engagement as deliberate action is likewise fulfilled. Various U.S. security, economic, political, and cultural interests are cited as the imperatives for war.

These examples of presidential rhetoric also contain alleged strategic misrepresentations, according to various media reports and scholarly articles. For the Bush administration, the biggest issue of misrepresentation is the existence of Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq (Hartnett & Stengrim, 2004). For McKinley, the contentious issue is whether the promise of independence was made (and broken) to the Filipino leadership (***New York Times***, 1900).

Three striking analogies are drawn from the Bush speeches and McKinley/ Roosevelt annual messages that go beyond the generic criteria. First, the sections of the presidential rhetoric dealing with prolonged engagement present

similar arguments: (1) praise for U.S. military personnel; (2) claiming support from a majority of the occupied country's population and their eagerness to adopt a U.S.-style democracy; and (3) justification of an indefinite time frame for waging a successful military campaign. Second, after enumerating these deliberative arguments regarding continued intervention, the speeches pivot toward epideictic statements that elevate American prestige. Third, the language used is paternalistic.

The precursor to the indefinite time frame argument is a statement praising the Americans serving in uniform. On November 11, 2005, Bush, speaking at a Veterans' Day celebration, begins by honoring retired U.S. military personnel. He then says "a new generation of Americans is defending our flag and our freedom in the first war of the 21st century." On November 30, 2005, while speaking at the Naval Academy, Bush says "as we fight the enemy in Iraq, every man and woman who volunteers to defend our nation deserves an unwavering commitment to the mission…." In the 2006 State of the Union (SOTU), Bush states "Our men and women in uniform are making sacrifices — and showing a sense of duty above all fear."

In his 1899 annual message, McKinley likewise praises the military: "They voluntarily remained at the front until their places could be filled by new troops… I recommend that Congress provide a special medal of honor…." Similarly, in his 1900 annual message, the former president claims that "our forces have successfully controlled the greater part of the islands… carrying order and administrative regularity to all quarters."

After extolling the skills and virtues of the U.S. military, the subsequent rhetorical pivot attempts to establish that majority of the foreign populations are grateful for the military presence of the U.S. and need America to maintain order so that that there can be a smooth transition to democratic civilian rule. For example, McKinley (1899) states "I had every reason to believe… that this transfer of sovereignty (from Spain to the U.S.) was in accordance with the wishes and aspirations of the great mass of Filipino people" and follows it up with a discussion of turning over local government to Filipinos as soon as possible, the provision of education, the establishment of a court system, and the growth of trade and commerce. Bush (2005, November 30) likewise rhetorically links security and democratization: "All these (terrorists) have is the capacity and willingness to kill the innocent…" and "… we're helping the Iraqis build a free society, with inclusive democratic institutions that will protect the interests of all Iraqis." In the 2006 SOTU, the president expands his claim of support from Iraqis to people of the whole region when he says "… liberty is the future of every nation in the Middle East, because liberty is the right and hope of all humanity."

Having thanked the military and stated linkages between security and democracy, the indefinite timeframe can then be asserted. In McKinley's (1899) words, "… there has been no time since the destruction of the Spanish squadron… when it was possible to withdraw our forces…." Bush, on November 30, 2005, sings a similar refrain: "We will stay as long as necessary to complete the mission." Although he softens his stated position in the 2006 SOTU, likely due to criticism for lack of an Iraq exit strategy, Bush maintains that "… those decisions (bringing U.S. troops home) will be made by our military commanders, not by politicians in Washington, D.C." This statement belies the fact that it is the president of the United States that makes strategic military decisions based on recommendations from military leaders. In so doing, Bush avoids setting a timetable for a pullout from Iraq.

As regards rhetorical structure, these examples shift from deliberative arguments to epideictic discourse. After discussing details of the American occupation in Iraq, Bush (2005, November 30) says "advancing the ideal of democracy and self-government is a mission that created our nation, and now it is the calling of a new generation of Americans." In the SOTU, Bush insists that America must "choose to lead (in fighting terrorism) because it is a privilege to serve the values that gave us birth." McKinley in 1899 reminds his readers that "A right interpretation of the people's will and of duty cannot fail to insure wise measures for the welfare of the islands that which have come under the authority of the United States, and inure to… the lasting honor of our country."

Through these examples, we can discern a pattern of argumentation that effectively cuts off dissent. Whether or not one agrees with the particular initiatives enumerated, disagreement is very difficult to maintain when these initiatives are rhetorically elevated to the level of national principles and values.

The presidents assert American exceptionalism and employ paternalistic language in talking about the foreign people, although the latter is much less evident for Bush than McKinley and Roosevelt. I believe the difference can be explained in no small part by massive shifts in social norms — there is a huge difference between what a U.S. president can publicly say in the globalized twenty-first century as opposed to the early twentieth century when colonialism had yet to be internationally eradicated and news media with global reach did not exist. Nevertheless, hints of paternalism come through when Bush (2005, November 11) says "we didn't ask for this struggle, but we're answering history's call … and we're working to give millions in a troubled region a hopeful alternative to resentment and violence." McKinley's words in 1899 are more strident, "Our flag has never waved over any community but in blessing. I believe the Filipinos will soon recognize the fact that it has not lost its gift

of benediction in its world-wide journey to their shores…." Roosevelt's 1901 message reads like McKinley's, "We do not desire to do for the islanders merely what has elsewhere been done… We hope to do for them what has never been done before for any people of the tropics…."

As Niskanen (2004) opines, "The U.S. rhetoric supporting military occupation of the Philippines reflected both an imperialistic attitude and a paternalistic perspective toward the Filipinos." Use of paternalistic language not only seeks to elevate America's prestige in the eyes of the president's domestic audience, it likewise characterizes the foreign people as requiring the benevolent assistance of the U.S. in recreating themselves in the "image and likeness" of America. Establishing a patron-client relationship between the U.S. and the occupied country makes it more difficult to argue that the foreign people reject U.S. presence on their soil.

Conclusion and Current Relevance

This paper argues that when Bush, McKinley, and Roosevelt sought to justify extended military engagement overseas, most of the generic criteria proposed by Campbell and Jamieson (1990) held sway over the content and their modes of argumentation. However, three additional generic features emerged through analogic analysis of the texts. First, the sections of the presidential rhetoric dealing with prolonged engagement presented similar arguments: (1) praise for U.S. military personnel, (2) support from the occupied country's population and their eagerness to adopt a U.S.-style democracy, and (3) justification of an indefinite time frame. Second, after enumerating these deliberative arguments regarding continuing military intervention, the speeches pivoted toward epideictic statements that elevated American prestige. Third, the language used was paternalistic and denoted a patron-client relationship between the U.S. and the occupied country. These three rhetorical characteristics support the existence of the subgenre of the war rhetoric of extension.

There remains a key limitation that needs to be addressed. My claim of generic departure in war rhetoric comes from a limited sample of reviewed messages and speeches. This issue has been identified by scholars as a problem in doing analogic criticism. To address this limitation, other overseas conflicts can and should be tested in subsequent research to validate this paper's claims. For example, presidential rhetoric pertaining to other past conflicts, such as that of Vietnam or the Cold War, can be compared to that of Iraq. The external validity of this study's findings might also be tested by investigating whether they persist in war rhetoric from other countries and other rhetorical situations arising from armed conflict.

Additional reasons support the subgenre's existence, i.e., the rhetorical characteristics identified persist despite differences in medium and time frame. McKinley and Roosevelt's war rhetoric were in the form of written annual messages while Bush delivered his war speeches orally. The years 2003-2006 and 1899-1902 are obviously different time periods and the Iraq War is arguably a very different type of U.S. international military engagement. I believe that since the subgenre's rhetorical characteristics are manifest despite these differences in medium and context, the persistent nature of the subgenre is supported.

When employed by the president of the United States, these rhetorical characteristics have the potential to contribute to the enhanced power wielded by the commander in chief during times of war, allowing for extended military involvement overseas. However, the resulting sanction for prolonged military operations leads to very high expectations and makes the president increasingly vulnerable to criticism.

Up until this point, this paper has made an effort to isolate the Iraq War from the larger War on Terror repeatedly asserted by the Bush administration. However, this was not the case in popular perception. Prior to the Obama presidency, the phrases "War on Terror" and "a free and democratic Iraq" were fused in the public mind. Moreover, these phrases shackled the former president to unwieldy expectations, which was not the case for McKinley and Roosevelt during the Philippine-American War.

In President Bush's unique rhetorical situation, the conceptual conflation and wide domestic and international diffusion of these phrases resulted in very high expectations for his administration's prosecution of the War on Terror; namely, that the U.S.-led coalition forces convincingly defeat the inchoate entity called "global terrorism" and that Iraq transitions into a stable U.S.-styled democratic system. Neither of these outcomes occurred during the Bush presidency nor are they likely to happen in the near future. When presidents find themselves in this kind of situation, sophisticated rhetorical strategies (i.e., "redefine(ing) grounding premises in the rhetorical legacy to encompass rhetorical needs (or) reconcil(ing) antagonistic premises in his institution" [Jamieson 1998:97]) can be employed in varying the list of possible policy options. For instance, current President Barack Obama has shifted the rhetorical focus of U.S. military engagement overseas and has avoided making references to the War on Terror as an aspect of the country's foreign and defense policy.

For policy practitioners and the citizenry, rhetorical analysis can play a significant role in illuminating policy debates pertaining to extended U.S. military engagements abroad. More broadly, this kind of scholarship can shed

light on what is often considered to be a shadowy interplay between rhetorical and policymaking processes at the highest levels of government. The war rhetoric of extension is an example of the ways in which the U.S. presidency can seek to enlarge its power to make decisions that have life or death implications on the lives of citizens in the U.S. and in foreign countries ravaged by war.

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ANTONIO LAMBINO II is a doctoral candidate at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School for Communication and a communication and governance specialist at the World Bank in Washington, D.C. (corresponding author: alambino@post.harvard.edu).