

Determining how Legislators and Media Sources portray Health Issues

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Abstract

This thesis examines the relationship between law and the media by looking at two important and politicized health issues, abortion and HIV/AIDS, in New York and Tennessee. In order to achieve this goal, legislative discussion and media articles were dissected using MAXQDA and results were analyzed using Excel. Results demonstrated that abortion and HIV/AIDS differ in how they are portrayed in state legislatures and media sources. My findings show that abortion is a highly opinionated topic that struggles with scientific legitimacy due to the political domination of abortion frames while HIV is considered more of a scientific issue but struggles with stigma. The results also show that, based on the topic, media sources vary in the extent to which they follow the frames and biases perpetuated by partisan politics. Overall, this thesis sheds light on the relationship between legislators and media journalists and between abortion and HIV/AIDS.

Introduction

The public health approach follows a strict order: conducting epidemiological research to collect data on a problem, finding and addressing the risk factors associated with the problem, and creating and implementing policy to solve the problem. This flow of information indicates that health policy determines which aspects of public health are seen and heard by the public. While media portrayal is not officially a part of the public health approach, it is an important factor that influences how health issues and political decisions are understood. This thesis examines legislative discussion to determine what policymakers use to discuss and determine health laws. Therefore, this thesis examines media portrayals of health issues in an attempt to uncover any similarities and differences between legislators' framing and media sources' framing.

To better understand the relationship between state legislators and media sources (newspaper articles), this thesis focuses on abortion and HIV/AIDS: two private health issues that have been politicized. Our country has been grappling with these important public health problems for several decades. Even though these issues belong to a private domain, they have been played out in the public arena through policy and the media. The public opinion on these

two issues varies, and the story has played out differently in various states based on state politics. To better understand the politicization of these two issues, this project will focus on these specific issues and their movements in two states: New York (NY) and Tennessee (TN).

The pro-choice movement, with members advocating for the right to an abortion, has not experienced as much success as the HIV/AIDS movement, with members advocating for access to life-saving medicines. After *Roe v. Wade* (1973) legalized abortions, membership in the pro-life movement, or the group that is against a woman's rights to receive abortions, increased as they aimed to ban abortions in the United States. On the other hand, when HIV/AIDS patients faced stigma and did not receive proper help from the government, in the 1980s, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACTUP) pushed the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to circulate a drug that could help HIV-positive patients. While the politicization of abortion increased opposition to the procedure, hurting its ability to reach women in need, the politicization of HIV/AIDS increased activism for those affected by the disease. Because abortion and HIV/AIDS are politicized health issues, logically, it would make sense if the movements for the two issues had similar paths. However, this clear difference in success demonstrates a need to further explore these issues.

This project uncovers differences in abortion and HIV/AIDS portrayal in an attempt to better understand why the two movements had such different types of political success. This thesis answers these specific questions: Are there any notable differences in how abortion and HIV/AIDS are portrayed in legislatures and in media articles? How does the media frame the health issues that have been brought into the public sphere through law? Do they replicate the frames and biases perpetuated by partisan politics or are they influenced by outside forces?

For this project, I simultaneously examined legislative discussion of bills and

newspaper articles specific to these issues. I researched legislators' views, approaches, research, and focal points and examined newspaper articles' focus, overall approach to storytelling, and major themes. I analyzed bills and articles from NY and TN as they have different political leanings and made note of which side each legislator or journalist belonged to: pro-choice, pro-life, for needle exchange programs, or against needle exchange programs. I utilized MAXQDA, a program intended for qualitative data analysis, to create codes, to identify the topics discussed in legislative testimony, and to find the most mentioned topics in news articles. I then analyzed the codes to compare the states' and sides' approaches to abortion and HIV/AIDS policy and media portrayal and to identify any differences in the public representation of the issues. While this project will focus on two specific movements, it is first important to examine previous literature on the relationships between health, law, and the media.

Translating Public Health Research to Law

Translating public health research into law is complex, and healthcare topics can be politicized. Why is this the case? For HIV/AIDS, research indicates that it is due to stigma towards transmission of the disease as well as the injustices the disease highlights (Piot et al., 2007). The stigma towards health issues such as abortion and HIV/AIDS make it more appealing to look to the politics of the issue rather than to the issue itself. In addition, health legislation in the United States varies by state due to legislators' opinions. Legislators have the power to research a health problem and decide which aspects of the issue to focus on when deciding on public health laws. The laws that they create perpetuate the social determinants of health, including socioeconomic status and race (Burris, 2011; Burris et al., 2002; Sandel et al., 2010). For example, when AIDS hit, lawmakers had to answer several questions regarding testing,

confidentiality, and discrimination (Matthews & Neslund, 1987). Therefore, legislator opinion can have a large effect on healthcare. Overall, legislators have the power to interpret health research based on their opinions. This thesis examines how legislators' strategies vary based on health issue.

Effect of Legislator Opinion on Healthcare Decisions

Legislators vary in their background and opinions; therefore, they bring their own perspectives into the law-making arena. Buchanan et al review attitudes towards AIDS Medicaid policies and find that various factors affect the decision-making process, including gender and political party (Buchanan & Ohsfeldt, 1993). Regan and Lockerbie find that factors such as religion and gender affect legislator's decisions on various topics (Regan and Lockerbie 1993). Padamsee et al find that morals can outweigh science in HIV policy making decisions (Padamsee, 2017). The makeup of legislators affects how they perceive evidence presented to them. Their understanding of the evidence impacts various policies.

Legislators' Perspectives during Legislative Discussions

Legislators bring these varying perspectives into the general assembly, where they discuss for or against certain policies. These legislative discussions have been examined by researchers to better understand legislators' understanding of the issues. Evans and Narasimhan examine the pro-life arguments used in testimony for the Georgia heartbeat bill with a focus on the Science and Technology Committee and the Health and Human Services Committee. The authors fact checked arguments of science and found that pro-life advocates used inaccuracies of science to support their idea that fetuses deserve rights (Evans and Narasimhan 2019). Graham analyzes variations in Florida's legislative session on abortion and finds that pro-life advocates were more likely to use emotional arguments while pro-choice advocates were more likely to use

ethical arguments (Graham 1996). Similarly to Evans and Narasimhan, Segers looks at the testimonies for two bills regarding congressional authority on abortion and human assignment to fetuses. She finds variations in philosophical ideas between the two sides of the debate (Segers 1982). Finally, Aaronson and Luthra discuss the role of personal testimonies heard by legislators for a Texas bill aiming to impose regulations on abortion clinics (Aaronson and Luthra 2013). The article emphasizes the different emotional testimonies legislators hear before making a decision. Overall, many different sources inform legislators' opinion, all of which come together during the legislative discussion of bills. This thesis examines legislative discussion of abortion and HIV/AIDS bills to learn about how legislators frame their opinions on these health issues.

How States Vary in their Legislative Makeup

Because legislators belong to a state, the law can vary by state, solely due to differences in legislative makeup. A review by Lamboi and Sy shows how many HIV/AIDS laws vary by state (Lamboi & Sy, 1989), highlighting the importance of examining the effect of these variations on HIV policy and public opinion. One study compares states and finds that states without many testing laws have lower prenatal testing rates (FitzHarris et al., 2018). Another study finds that more conservative states seem to spend less money on AIDS (Colby & Baker, 1988). Variations in health outcomes highlight the importance of state political differences during health policy decisions. This study adds to the literature of state politics by comparing abortion and HIV/AIDS legislative discussion in NY and TN, two states with different political leanings.

The Law's Use of Framing

Legal actors take advantage of framing. Druckman defines framing effects as ways in which people of power emphasize certain points when discussing important issues (Druckman 2001). The legal arena can help shape the meaning of various healthcare issues through framing.

Framing can drastically alter legislative decisions, as shown in previous literature. Huff examines how the pro-life movement utilizes ideas of women as victims. From examination of South Dakota bills HB 1233 and HB 1166, she finds that the pro-life program was effective because legislators felt as though they were upholding accurate science and helping powerless citizens (Huff 2014). This paper delineates how successfully framing evidence is crucial to winning arguments and passing legislation.

Finally, framing by the law can give the field the power to impact societal thought. Wiezien and Goggin demonstrate that legislators' actions and decisions affect public opinion. The authors find that court cases lead to an increase in public support for abortion, but they also lead to an increase in pro-life activity (Wiezien and Goggin 1993). This thesis examines how legislators' use of framing, or how their views, approach, research, and focus, impact bill discussions. While the legal arena plays an important role in healthcare outcomes and public opinion, the relationship the law and health have with the media further impacts healthcare and public opinion.

Media and Policy

The media has a large influence on policy. Legal actors focus on public opinion in order to satisfy their constituents (Brownson et al., 2006); therefore, lawmakers use the media to decipher public opinion and determine their focus. This can not only lead to incorrect assumptions of important issues but can also delay action on important issues (Otten, 1992). While the media affects policy, interestingly, not many papers discuss the effect of policy on the

media. This thesis aims to address this gap in the literature by examining media portrayal at around the same time as legislative discussions of important bills. While the media influences policy, it can also influence healthcare knowledge.

Media and Health Information

Members of society use various forms of media as their primary source of information. The media includes television news broadcasts, social media, and newspapers, to name a few. How various forms of media present information affects how individuals in society perceive the world around them. The tension between media and health is primarily due to media sources' focus on the politics of health issues and their potential to spread misinformation (Gollust et al., 2019). Misinformation can be found in the original media source.

The Power of Information present in Media Sources

Specific misinformation in original media sources is represented by framing. Individuals choose media sources that they rely on and believe are credible. The trust that is created between an individual and his or her media sources is a powerful tool. Media sources can take advantage of this trust by framing issues in a certain way to ensure their audience takes away certain themes regarding the issue at hand. Gollust et al examine the roles that television news broadcasts hold. They inform the public while framing each issue based on a specific interpretation, leading to the socialization of these opinions in society (Gollust et al., 2019). Therefore, the media can shape societal thought. For example, depiction of sexuality in the media has been increasing in recent years, and the media, especially through television shows, is where many adolescents learn about sex. Sexual education is a very important topic; however, rather than inform the public about contraceptives and the consequences of sex, the media chooses to ignore the responsibilities that come with the act (Brown, 2002). The media, by framing sexuality in different ways, can have

negative impacts on the sexual education of adolescents. The media is free to choose which facts it shares with the public, and this thesis examines major themes abortion and HIV/AIDS newspaper articles focus on in an attempt to better understand how media sources portray health issues.

Media Framing and Abortion/Reproductive Health

Media framing of health issues is evident when looking at the portrayal of abortion and reproductive health. Many studies compare newspapers and find evidence of framing (Gianella, 2017; Larsson et al., 2015; Purcell et al., 2014). Conti and Cahill find that different media sources, like news articles, movies, and social media, present abortion in varying ways that influence cultural and political thought (Conti & Cahill, 2017). Various studies on television find that media portrayal of abortion and contraception are inaccurate (Morris & McInerney, 2010; Sisson et al., 2017; Sisson & Kimport, 2014, 2016; Sisson & Rowland, 2017). Pruitt and Mullen find that almost 50% of articles they examined are not accurate in their descriptions of abortions and emergency contraception (Pruitt & Mullen, 2005). This is especially important because Kimport and Doty find that people tend to use the language of abortion or anti-abortion movements, meaning that the frames of the movements influence peoples' understanding of the topic (Chibango & Maharaj, 2018; Geloo, 1991; Kimport & Doty, 2019). Overall, the information portrayed by the media on various health issues not only influences individual opinion of these issues but can also negatively affect people's understanding of important health issues, potentially leading to worsening health outcomes.

Media Framing and HIV/AIDS

Research on HIV/AIDS in the media has also focused on framing and media portrayal. A few studies compared different media outlets in either Africa or India and found that newspaper

companies and journalists used their articles to influence societal thought on HIV/AIDS (D'Angelo et al., 2013; de Souza, 2007; Kiwanuka-Tondo et al., 2012). While the media frames HIV/AIDS, it also decides what area of the epidemic to focus on. Stevens and Hull look at HIV article frequency and focus on newspapers in the United States. They find that the article number has decreased and the focus has become international, undermining the effect the epidemic has had on African Americans (Stevens & Hull, 2013). In addition, while in the past, scientists contributed to the increase in media portrayal of HIV/AIDS, recently, celebrities have become the primary reason the media discusses the disease ("Covering the Epidemic," 1996). Kern and Forman find that HIV advertisements tend to focus less on prevention and more on stigma or salvation (Kern & Forman, 2013). By focusing on certain aspects and leaving out information, the media has painted a picture of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in individuals' minds. This thesis underscores the importance of media framing of health issues by determining major themes of newspaper articles.

Power of Legislators and Media Sources

So far, the literature demonstrates the impact legislators and media sources have over health issues. As we have seen, legislators and media sources take advantage of the power they have to perpetuate their ideas about various health issues. This framing can negatively affect the public either by spreading misinformation or focusing more on the politicization of health rather than on the health issue itself. Overall, an important power dynamic has been uncovered between journalists, legislators, citizens, and public health researchers. This thesis examines the portrayal of health issues through the lens of legislators and media journalists.

The Relationship between the Media and the Law regarding Healthcare issues

Now that we have established that legislators and media sources hold a tremendous amount of power over healthcare through how they present healthcare issues, we can think about whether or not the media replicates the frames and biases perpetuated by partisan politics. The relationship between the media, law, and health is a complex one. Health research informs policy. However, policy wields its power and chooses which aspects of health to focus on to create law. The media then chooses which aspects of the policy to focus on. This thesis examines the relationship between the media and the legislature. The project takes a detailed look at the abortion and HIV/AIDS movements to see how the media has portrayed both issues and whether or not the media borrows from the legislative framing of these issues.

Previous Literature on Abortion and HIV/AIDS

Because this study examines abortion and HIV/AIDS, it is important to learn about previous literature that looks at the two issues together. There are various studies that focus on abortion and HIV/AIDS; however, most of the literature focuses on women infected with HIV/AIDS and the politics behind their decision to get an abortion. These articles discuss the lack of access (Orner et al., 2011; Taravella, 1989), bans (Rosenthal, 1990), men's roles, women's rights, and choice (Greco et al., 1999). Other articles discuss the ethics of testing children (North, 1990), ethics around HIV in children (R. Bayer, 1991; Ronald Bayer, 1990; Howe, 1990), and how young girls face risks regarding unsafe abortions and STDs (De Bruyn, 1999; Radhakrishna et al., 1997). Even more articles examine the ethics surrounding reproductive health issues (Rosenfield, 1994) or the legislation surrounding the issues (Sollom, 1993). While previous literature discusses important ideas, such as decisions pregnant women living with HIV face, ethical issues regarding children and HIV, and young women's struggle to learn about important yet stigmatized issues, there is a gap in the literature regarding the

comparison of the two health movements' legal and media portrayals. This thesis aims to contribute to this gap in the literature.

Methods

Abortion Legislation

Obtaining Data

To begin this project, two abortion bills were identified: one from NY and one from TN. The TN bill is the HB0077 bill, known as the fetal heartbeat bill from 2019 that went through the state House and Senate but ultimately did not get passed. TN is still very intent on passing a fetal heartbeat bill, as a new one has been introduced this year, so the HB0077 bill is representative of the state's pro-life values. The TN General Assembly website has a comprehensive page on the bill (<http://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/BillInfo/Default.aspx?BillNumber=HB0077>). The NY bill is the Reproductive Health Act (RHA) that was passed in 2019. The NY State Assembly website also has a comprehensive page on the bill

(https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?default_fld=&leg_video=&bn=A00021&term=2019&Text=Y&Chamber%26nbspVideo%2FTranscript=Y). The discussions of the bills are between the members of the state Senate and House of Representatives. The videos and transcripts of the hearings for each bill were used. The NY General Assembly website contained a transcript of the legislative discussion of the RHA. The TN General Assembly website did not contain a transcript of the discussion of the HB0077 bill, so a transcript was created after listening to the video of the discussion of the bill.

Analysis of Data

Once the transcripts for the two bills were obtained, they were uploaded onto MAXQDA. MAXQDA was used to code the document based on these three questions:

- What is the primary way abortion is framed? Example codes include abortion as a medical issue or an emotional issue.
- Whose rights are important based on state and side? Example codes include unborn baby's rights and rights of the medical profession.
- What evidence is utilized based on state and side? Example codes include medical/research evidence and personal testimony.

Once each transcript was coded, each coded phrase was classified as belonging to the pro-life or pro-choice side. Next, the numbers for each code based on state and side were counted. Excel was used to make tables and graphs of the final data, which are presented in the results section of this paper. Then, the figures below, along with the transcripts of the testimonies, were analyzed, which is presented in the analysis of results section of this paper.

HIV/AIDS Legislation

Obtaining Data

Two needle exchange bills were identified: one from NY and one from TN. The TN bill is the SB0806 bill from 2017 that went through the state House and Senate and did get passed. The bill allows qualifying NGOs to establish needle exchange programs. The TN General Assembly website has a comprehensive page on the bill (<http://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/BillInfo/default.aspx?BillNumber=SB0806&GA=110>). The NY bill is from 2010 meant to expand on the previously existing syringe access program to allow the sale of nonprescription syringes. The NY State Assembly website does not have a comprehensive page on this bill, but they do have a page with the legislative discussion of the bill (<https://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/transcripts/2010-06-22T13%3A32/>). The discussions of the bills are between the members of the state Senate and House of Representatives. The videos

and transcripts of the hearings for each bill were used. Once again, the NY General Assembly website contained a transcript of the legislative discussion of the bill. The TN General Assembly website did not contain a transcript of the discussion of the SB0806 bill, so a transcript was created after listening to the video of the discussion of the bill.

Analysis of Data

Once the transcripts for the two bills were obtained, they were uploaded onto MAXQDA. MAXQDA was used to code the document based on these five questions:

- Why is this bill important? Example codes include duty to help or a public health issue.
- Who benefits from this bill? Example codes include who the bill helps/protection and drug users/abusers.
- What are the criticisms of a needle exchange program? Example codes include safety of children and drug addiction concerns.
- How is a needle exchange program run? Example codes include money and criminal liability/immunity.
- How important are HIV/AIDS and other diseases to the legislators. Rather than use codes, answering this question relied on the number of mentions of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and diseases in general.

Once each transcript was coded, each coded phrase was classified as belonging to the side in support of needle exchange programs, to the side against needle exchange programs, or a question. Next, the numbers for each code based on state and side were counted. Excel was used to make tables and graphs of the final data, which are presented in the results section of this paper. Then, the figures below, along with the transcripts of the testimonies, were analyzed, which is presented in the analysis of results section of this paper.

Abortion Articles

Obtaining Data

This portion of the project required looking at newspaper articles discussing the two abortion bills in TN and NY: HB0077 and the RHA. The TN newspaper for this project was *The Tennessean*, and the NY newspapers were *The NY Times* and *NY Daily News*. In order to gain a comprehensive view of what the newspapers discussed regarding these bills, newspaper articles were examined both 6 months before and 6 months after the legislative discussion of the bill. For Tennessee, the fetal heartbeat bill legislative discussion was on March 7th, 2019. Using ProQuest and its filters, the TN articles were collected from *The Tennessean* in these date ranges: 9/5/18 - 3/6/19; 3/7/19 - 9/5/19. The search term used was “heartbeat bill.” For New York, the RHA was discussed on January 22nd, 2019. Using ProQuest and its filters, the NY articles were collected from *The NY Times* and the *NY Daily News* (due to a lack of newspaper articles) in these date ranges: 7/16/18 - 1/21/19; 1/22/19 - 7/23/19. The search term used was “NY Reproductive Health Act” AND “abortion” due to a lack of newspaper articles.

Analysis of Data

Once the transcripts for the two bills were obtained, they were uploaded onto MAXQDA. MAXQDA was used to code the document based on these questions:

- How do the journalists refer to the issue of abortion? Example codes include women’s health/rights and baby rights.
- What information do the journalists include? Example codes include urgency and opinion.
- Is the information skewed to favor either the pro-life or the pro-choice side? Example codes include pro-choice lawsuits and pro-life bias.

Once each transcript was coded, each code was used to determine whether or not they represented a major theme in their group of articles. Excel was used to make tables of the final data, which are presented in the results section of this paper. Then, the figures below, along with the text in the articles, were analyzed, which is presented in the analysis of results section of this paper.

HIV/AIDS Articles

Obtaining Data

This portion of the project required looking at newspaper articles discussing the two abortion bills in TN and NY: SB0806 and the bill meant to expand on the syringe access program. The TN newspaper for this project was *The Tennessean*, and the NY newspapers were *The NY Times* and *NY Daily News*. In order to gain a comprehensive view of what the newspapers discussed regarding these bills, newspaper articles were examined both 6 months before and 6 months after the legislative discussion of the bill. For Tennessee, the SB0806 legislative discussion was on May 4th, 2017. Using ProQuest and its filters, the TN articles were collected from *The Tennessean* in these date ranges: 11/2/16 - 5/3/17; 5/4/17 - 11/2/17. The search term used was “needle exchange.” This search term is more general than in the abortion portion of the project because searching for SB0806 did not yield sufficient results. For NY, the bill meant to expand on the syringe access program was discussed on June 22nd, 2010. Using ProQuest and its filters, the TN articles were collected from *The NY Times* and the *NY Daily News* in these date ranges: 12/22/09 - 6/21/10; 6/22/10 - 12/21/19. The search term used was “needle exchange.” Again, this search term is more general than in the abortion portion of the project in order to yield sufficient results. It is important to note that adding *NY Daily News* to the filters in this search did not yield any additional results.

Analysis of Data

Once the transcripts for the two bills were obtained, they were uploaded onto MAXQDA.

MAXQDA was used to code the document based on these questions:

- How do the journalists refer to the issue of needle exchange? Example codes include drug users' voices and addicts.
- What information do the journalists include? Example codes include personal story and urgency.
- Is the information skewed to favor either the side that is either in support of or against needle exchange programs? Example codes include bias against the administration and doing the right thing.

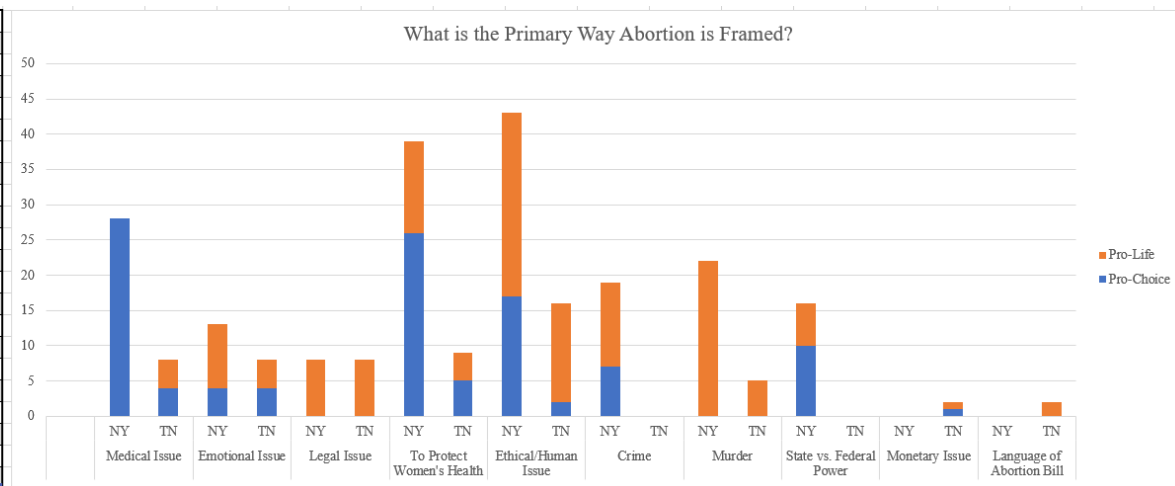
Once each transcript was coded, each code was used to determine whether or not they represented a major theme in their group of articles. Excel was used to make tables of the final data, which are presented in the results section of this paper. Then, the figures below, along with the text in the articles, were analyzed, which is presented in the analysis of results section of this paper.

Results

Abortion Legislation

Figure 1: *What is the Primary Way Abortion is Framed?* This figure includes a table and a graph that shows how NY, TN, pro-choice, and pro-life legislators view abortion. The views on abortion are codes used in MAXQDA

What is the Primary Way Abortion is Framed?			
		Pro-Choice	Pro-Life
Medical Issue	NY	28	0
	TN	4	4
Emotional Issue	NY	4	9
	TN	4	4
Legal Issue	NY	0	8
	TN	0	8
To Protect Women's Health	NY	26	13
	TN	5	4
Ethical/Human Issue	NY	17	26
	TN	2	14
Crime	NY	7	12
	TN	0	0
Murder	NY	0	22
	TN	0	5
State vs. Federal Power	NY	10	6
	TN	0	0
Monetary Issue	NY	0	0
	TN	1	1
Language of Abortion Bill	NY	0	0
	TN	0	2



which include: Medical Issue, Emotional Issue, Legal Issue, To Protect Women’s Health, Ethical/Human Issue, Crime, Murder, State vs. Federal Power, Monetary Issue, and Language of Abortion Bill.

Whose Rights are Important based on State and Side?			
		Pro-Choice	Pro-Life
Abortion as a Right	NY	52	2
	TN	5	0
Unborn Baby's Rights	NY	6	20
	TN	0	14
Father's Rights	NY	0	3
	TN	2	0
Legal Rights for Medical Issues	NY	9	1
	TN	1	0
Rights of Medical Profession	NY	14	17
	TN	4	0

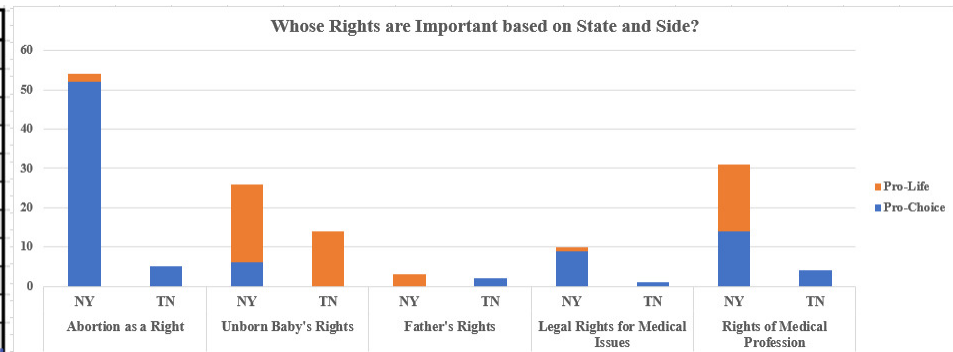


Figure 2: *Whose Rights are Important based on State and Side?* This figure includes a table and a graph that shows how NY, TN, pro-choice, and pro-life legislators view rights with regards to abortion. These rights are codes used in MAXQDA which include: Abortion as a Right, Unborn Baby’s Rights, Father’s Rights, Legal Rights for Medical Issues, and Rights of Medical Profession.

What Evidence is Utilized based on State and Side?			
		Pro-Choice	Pro-Life
Medical/Research Evidence	NY	52	2
	TN	5	0
Legal/Constitutional Evidence	NY	26	19
	TN	1	9
Religious Evidence/Testimony	NY	4	11
	TN	0	8
Personal Testimony	NY	30	9
	TN	3	9

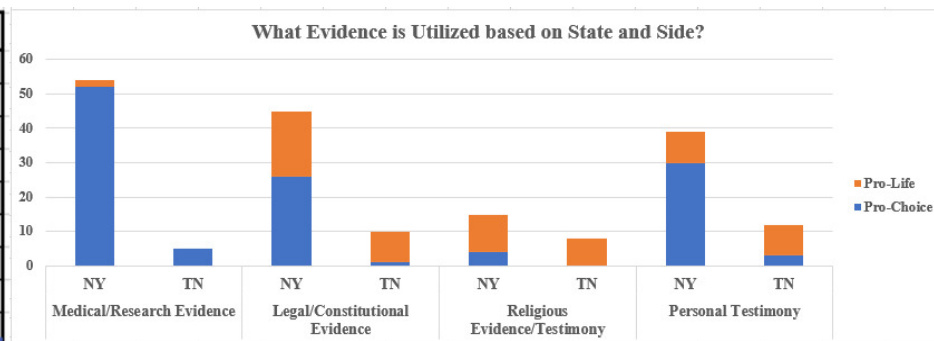


Figure 3: *What evidence is Utilized based on State and Side?* This figure includes a table and a graph that shows what evidence NY, TN, pro-choice, and pro-life legislators use. The types of evidence are codes used in MAXQDA which include: Medical/Research Evidence, Legal/Constitutional Evidence, Religious Evidence/Testimony, and Personal Testimony.

Analysis of Results

What is the Primary Way Abortion is Framed?

Looking at figure 1, there are a few variations on how legislators of the two states, NY and TN, frame abortion. My findings show differences in looking at abortion as a crime, looking at the issue between state and federal power, looking at abortion as a monetary issue, and looking at the language of the abortion bill (Figure 1). Abortion as a crime is not discussed in TN; however, it is discussed in NY. In NY, the pro-life argument is that, because the RHA would move abortion away from penal law, crimes related to pregnant women that result in the death of her baby can no longer be punished with as much severity. Specifically, the act will remove crimes for killing the baby but will keep crimes related to assault on the mother. In retaliation, the pro-choice side argues that the act will remove laws that categorize late-term abortions as criminal. In the New York legislative discussion of the RHA, legislators brought up the distinction between state and federal law because the pro-life side is interested in whether or not the RHA aims to follow *Roe v. Wade* (1973) guidelines or move past them. The pro-choice side aims to protect abortion rights in NY regardless of federal rulings. With looking at abortion as a monetary issue, TN legislators from both sides discuss economic implications of the bill. In addition, the pro-life legislators in TN discuss the importance of the language in the bill.

When comparing the pro-life and the pro-choice sides, it is evident that the pro-life side places an emphasis on abortion as a legal issue and as murder. They also consider the language of the bill (Figure 1). The pro-life side believes that there should be laws regulating abortion. In contrast, the pro-choice side believes that abortion should be considered a medical issue.

Whose Rights are important based on State and Side?

Based on figure 2, NY legislators discuss abortion as a right, legal rights for medical issues, and the rights of the medical profession more than TN legislators (Figure 2). They believe that women deserve access to abortion because of human rights and that the legislature does not have the right to regulate medical procedures. They also share concern regarding medical professional's roles in abortion care.

Based on figure 2, the pro-choice side maintains abortion as a right and believe that the legislative body should not regulate medical decisions while the pro-life side strongly advocates for the rights of the unborn child (Figure 2). Both sides debate rights of the medical profession. The pro-choice side maintains that medical professionals who are not physicians will have the right to perform abortions according to their licenses while the pro-life side worries about these medical professionals having that right. The two sides also discuss the necessity of having two doctors in the room while performing abortions. In addition, the pro-life side worries about protections for doctors who do not want to perform the abortions. Finally, the two sides differ in their discussion of the rights of the father. The pro-life side highlights the father's role in pregnancy and parenthood while the pro-choice side believes that men should not make abortion decisions for women.

What Evidence is Utilized based on State and Side?

Based on figure 3, the main difference in evidence utilized by the different state legislators is in the medical/research evidence. In addition, the pro-life side used more religious evidence/testimony while the pro-choice side used more medical/research evidence (Figure 3).

HIV Legislation

Why is this bill important?				
		For Needle Exchange Program	Against Needle Exchange Program	Question
Duty to Help	NY	2	0	0
	TN	5	0	0
Need for the Law	NY	1	0	0
	TN	7	0	0
Public Health Issue	NY	6	2	0
	TN	6	0	0
Scientific Reasoning	NY	2	0	0
	TN	5	1	0
Drug Addiction Treatment	NY	N/A	N/A	0
	TN	9	0	1

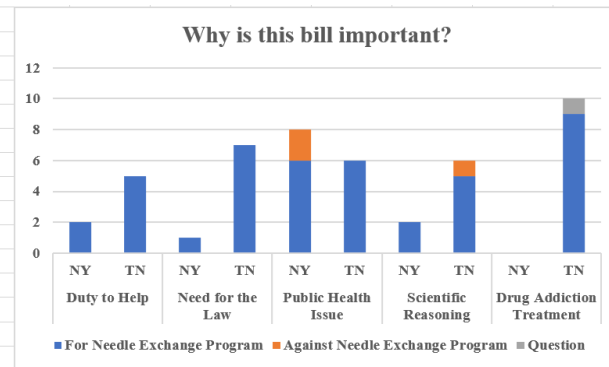


Figure 4: *Why is the bill important?* This figure includes a table and graph that shows how NY, TN, for needle exchange program legislators, and against needle exchange program legislators view the needle exchange program bill. It also has a questions column for anytime a legislator asked a question about the nuances of the bill. The views on explaining the importance of the bill are codes used in MAXQDA which include: Duty to Help, Need for the Law, Public Health Issue, Scientific Reasoning, and Drug Treatment.

Who Benefits from this Bill?				
		For Needle Exchange Program	Against Needle Exchange Program	Question
Who the bill helps/Protection	NY	6	0	0
	TN	3	0	0
Age Restrictions	NY	1	0	0
	TN	N/A	N/A	0
Drug Users/Abusers	NY	4	1	0
	TN	7	3	0
Program Advertisement	NY	3	0	0
	TN	N/A	N/A	0
State Controls	NY	N/A	N/A	0
	TN	2	0	1

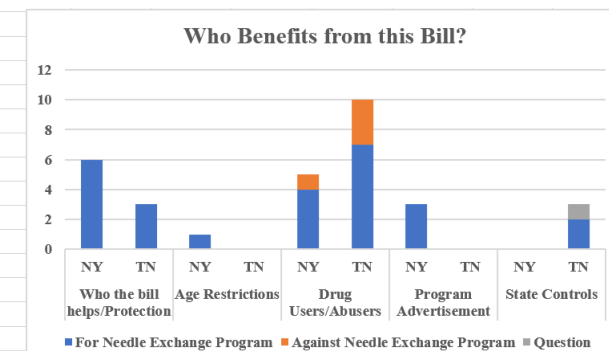


Figure 5: *Who Benefits from this Bill?* This figure includes a table and graph that shows who NY, TN, for needle exchange program legislators, and against needle exchange program legislators believe will benefit from the needle exchange program. It also has a questions column for anytime a legislator asked a question about the nuances of the bill. The views on explaining who benefits from the bill are codes used in MAXQDA which include: Who the bill helps/Protection, Age Restrictions, Drug Users/Abusers, Program Advertisement, and State Controls.

What are the Criticisms of a Needle Exchange Program?				
		For Needle Exchange Program	Against Needle Exchange Program	Question
Safety of Children	NY	0	1	0
	TN	2	0	0
Drug Addiction Concerns	NY	0	2	1
	TN	2	1	0
Syringe Safety	NY	8	0	1
	TN	6	3	2
Syringe Availability	NY	8	0	1
	TN	5	2	0
Alleviate Concerns	NY	4	0	0
	TN	7	0	0
Morality	NY	1	2	0
	TN	3	2	0

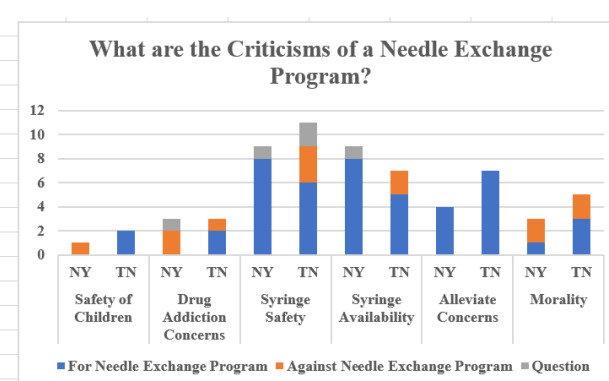


Figure 6: What are the Criticisms of a Needle Exchange Program? This figure includes a table and graph that shows what NY, TN, for needle exchange program legislators, and against needle exchange program legislators view as the worrisome aspects of a needle exchange program. It also has a questions column for anytime a legislator asked a question about the nuances of the bill. The views on explaining the criticisms of a needle exchange program are codes used in MAXQDA which include: Safety of Children, Drug Addiction Concerns, Syringe Safety, Syringe Availability, Alleviate Concerns, and Morality.

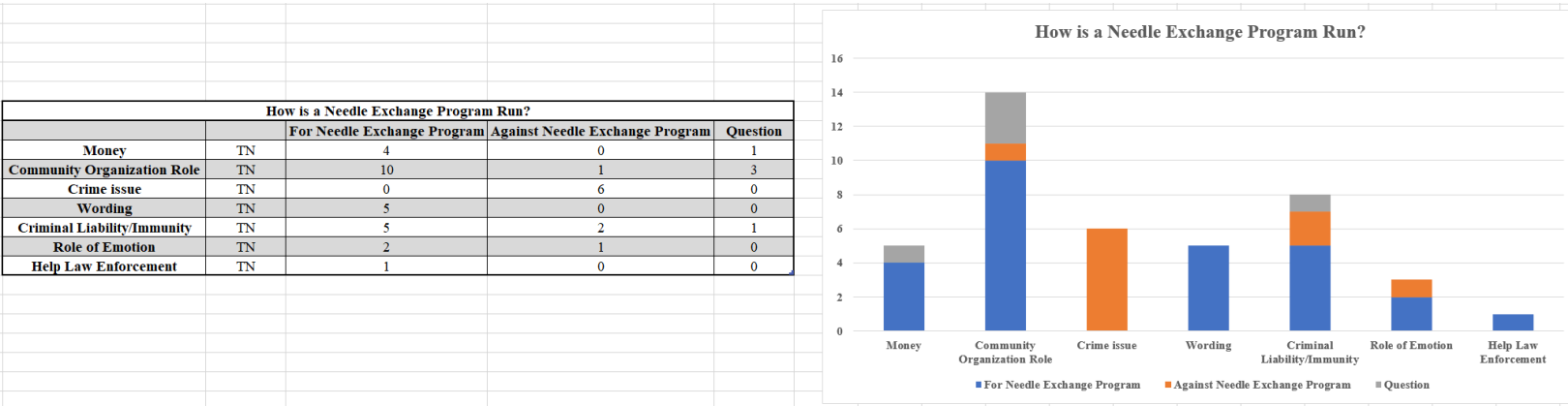


Figure 7: How is a Needle Exchange Program Run? This figure includes a table and graph that shows how TN, NY, for needle exchange program legislators, and against needle exchange program legislators view as the important aspects of how a needle exchange program is run. It also has a questions column for anytime a legislator asked a question about the nuances of the bill. The views on explaining how a needle exchange program is run are codes used in MAXQDA which include: Money, Community Organization Role, Crime Issue, Wording, Criminal Liability/Immunity, Role of Emotion, Help Law Enforcement.

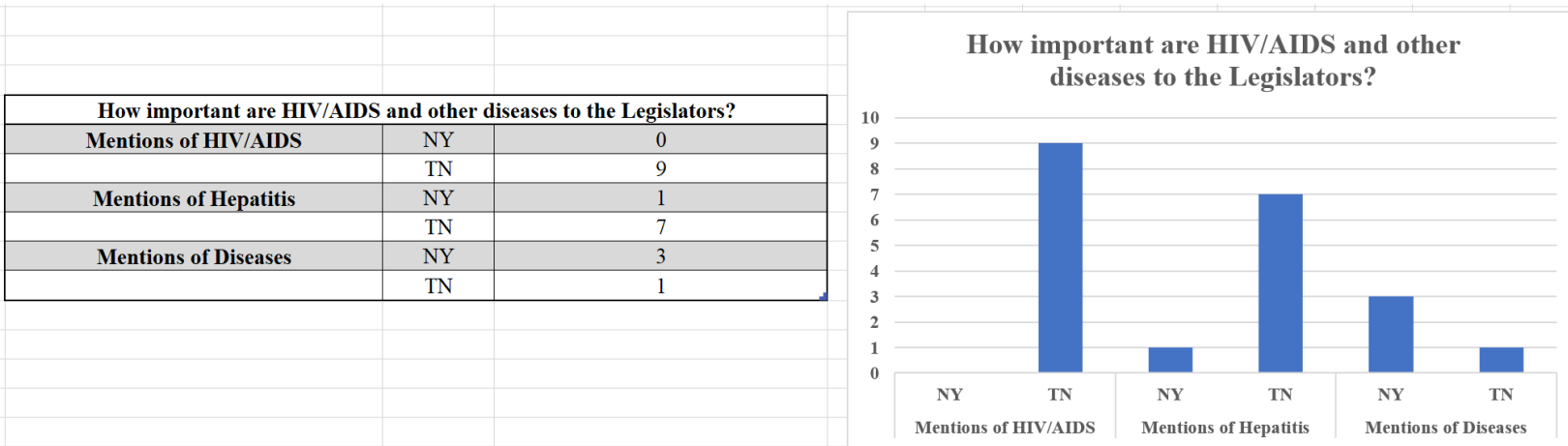


Figure 8: How important are HIV/AIDS and other diseases to the Legislators? This figure includes a table and graph that shows how important HIV/AIDS and other diseases are to NY and TN legislators. The number of times HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and diseases were brought up was counted.

Analysis of Results

Why is this Bill Important?

Looking at figure 4, there are a few variations in how legislators of the two states, NY and TN, look at the importance of needle exchange programs. My findings show differences in whether or not legislators feel there is a need for the law and whether or not they use scientific reasoning and drug addiction treatments as explanations of the importance of the law (Figure 4). TN legislators discuss the need for the law much more than the NY legislators. This may be because the NY bill dealt with updating a previously existing needle exchange program bill while the TN bill dealt with creating a needle exchange program in the state. With regards to scientific reasoning, while NY legislators point to the importance of needle exchange programs to help resolve bloodborne diseases, TN legislators discuss the effectiveness needle exchange programs have in trying to treat drug addiction. Finally, NY legislators do not discuss drug addiction treatments as an explanation for why needle exchange laws are important, but TN legislators do. The legislators discuss how successful previous programs have been in fighting against the war on drugs.

When comparing the sides for and against needle exchange programs, it is evident that the side for needle exchange programs discusses the importance of the bill much more than the side against needle exchange programs (Figure 4). However, when discussing the needle exchange program as a public health issue, in NY, a legislator against the program discusses the severity of the drug epidemic in NY and believes a needle exchange program will only hurt the epidemic. When discussing scientific reasoning to justify the importance of the needle exchange program, a legislator against needle exchange in TN discusses that there is no evidence of the medical profession ever using needle exchange programs.

Who benefits from this Bill?

Looking at figure 5, there are a few variations on how legislators of the two states, NY and TN, look at the beneficiaries of needle exchange programs. My findings show that the differences involve age restrictions, program advertisement, and state controls (Figure 5). TN legislators do not discuss age restrictions to participate in a needle exchange program; however, NY legislators point out that only people above 18 years will be allowed to participate. Program advertisement refers to NY legislators' point that pharmacies, with the help of this bill, will be able to advertise their involvement in needle exchange programs. Finally, TN legislators point out that programs will present data to the legislative body to demonstrate success or failure of needle exchange programs.

When comparing the sides for and against needle exchange programs, it is evident that the side for needle exchange programs discusses who benefits from the bill much more than the side against needle exchange (Figure 5). However, when discussing the drug users/abusers, the side for needle exchange programs sympathizes with drug users while the side against needle exchange programs paints a negative image of drug users.

What are the Criticisms of a Needle Exchange Program?

Looking at figure 6, there are a few variations on how legislators of the two states, NY and TN, look at the criticisms of needle exchange programs. My findings show that the differences involve drug addiction concerns and safety of children (Figure 6). In NY, legislators against needle exchange programs are worried about how a program may increase susceptibility to drug abuse; however, in TN, a few legislators for needle exchange programs advocate for them because of the susceptibility to drug abuse without them. Regarding the safety of children, in NY, legislators against the bill are worried about the safety of children while in TN, legislators

for needle exchange programs work to ensure the safety of children during the drafting of the bill.

When comparing the sides for and against needle exchange programs, it is evident that the side for needle exchange discusses syringe availability and safety much more than the side against needle exchange (Figure 6). However, legislators against needle exchange programs discuss morality more.

How is a Needle Exchange Program Run?

Looking at figure 7, it is evident that TN legislators discussed how the needle exchange program would be run while NY legislators did not. Again, this may be due to the fact that the NY bill dealt with updating a previously existing needle exchange program bill while the purpose of the TN bill was to create a needle exchange program in the state.

When comparing the sides for and against needle exchange programs, it is evident that the side for needle exchange discusses money, the role of community organizations, wording, criminal liability/immunity, the role of emotion, and how the program can help law enforcement more than the side against needle exchange (Figure 7). However, legislators against needle exchange programs discuss the criminal aspect of the bill more and believe that, because the bill includes aspects of criminal immunity and liability, it should be considered a criminal issue rather than a health issue.

How important are HIV/AIDS and other diseases to the Legislators?

Looking at figure 8, it is evident that TN legislators mention HIV and Hepatitis more than NY legislators (Figure 8), meaning that TN may be more concerned with how the needle exchange program can benefit HIV-positive individuals. NY legislators mention diseases more

than TN legislators, showing that they are also concerned with how needle exchange programs can help decrease the burden of disease. However, they are not as specific as TN legislators.

Number of Articles Six Months Before and After the Legislative Session discussing the Bills

Number of Abortion Articles		
	NY	TN
6 Months Before	4	14
6 Months After	4	28

Figure 9: *Number of Abortion Articles.* This table shows the number of articles regarding the abortion bills in The Tennessean and the NY Times 6 months before and after the legislative discussion of the bill in question.

Number of Needle Exchange Articles		
	NY	TN
6 Months Before	4	1
6 Months After	4	3

Figure 10: *Number of Needle Exchange Articles.* This table shows the number of articles regarding needle exchange programs in The Tennessean, the NY Times, and NY Daily News 6 months before and after the legislative discussion of the bill in question.

Analysis of Results

As can be seen in figures 9 and 10, there are a few variations in the number of articles based on state and time period. According to figure 9, TN had a larger number of articles discussing the abortion bills (Figure 9). While NY articles did also discuss NY’s abortion bill, TN discussed the TN abortion bill at a much higher rate, showing how important and divisive the issue of abortion is in TN. In addition, in TN, the number of articles was larger for the 6 months

after the heartbeat bill was discussed in the general assembly, most likely due to the increased attention the bill got after it went through the legislature. According to figure 10, both states had relatively few articles discussing needle exchange programs (Figure 10). While the abortion articles discussed the specific bills in each respective state, the articles regarding needle exchange programs did not mention the specific bills in question. In addition, TN had fewer mentions of needle exchange in their articles than NY (Figure 10). This may be due to the fact that needle exchange, HIV/AIDS, and drug addiction are topics of considerable stigma, especially in more conservative states like TN. Finally, NY had the same number of articles both before and after the bill was discussed in the legislative body for both abortion and needle exchange articles (Figures 8 and 10), suggesting that NY media sources may have a more balanced view of political issues, regardless of the status of the legislative assembly. TN, once again, had more articles discussing the issue after the needle exchange bill was discussed in the general assembly (Figure 10), again, most likely due to the increased attention the bill got after it went through the legislature.

Abortion Articles - Major Themes

Major Themes in Abortion Articles in TN	
6 Months Before Legislative Discussion	6 Months After Legislative Discussion
Bias	Bias
Women's Health/Rights vs. Baby Rights	Women's Health/Rights vs. Baby Rights
Republican/Life Arguments	Republican/Life Arguments
Role of Medical Players, Politics, Religion	Role of Medical Players, Politics, Religion, Public
Life Strategy, Justice/Courts Role, Constitutionality	Life Strategy, Justice/Courts Role, Constitutionality
	Pro choice Lawsuit, Money for Lawsuit
	Urgency/Morality
	Democrats for Life

Figure 11: *Major Themes in Abortion Articles in TN.* This figure shows the major themes present in abortion articles in TN 6 months before and after the legislative discussion of the bill in question.

Major Themes in Abortion Articles in NY	
6 Months Before Legislative Discussion	6 Months After Legislative Discussion
Urgency, Fear/Threat	Urgency, Fear/Threat
Role of Politics in Abortion, Political Issue	Role of Politics in Abortion
Choice Bias	Choice Bias, Life Bias
Women in Government	Immorality of Abortion
Abortion/Reproductive Rights	Disappointment in Cuomo as a Catholic
RHA and <i>Roe v. Wade</i> (1973)	Church vs. Government
Female Safety	

Figure 12: *Major Themes in Abortion Articles in NY.* This figure shows the major themes present in abortion articles in NY 6 months before and after the legislative discussion of the bill in question.

Analysis of Results

TN: Before

In TN, when looking at the media coverage six months before the legislative discussion of the heartbeat bill, 5 major themes present themselves. These are bias; women’s health/rights vs. baby rights; republican/life arguments; role of medical players, politics, religion; and life strategy, justice/courts role, constitutionality. The bias theme refers to biases against the pro-choice or pro-life side. Women’s health/rights vs. baby rights refers to mentions of how abortion is a right for women but also how an unborn baby has the right to be born. The Republican/life arguments theme refers to arguments between pro-life lawmakers for and against the heartbeat bill due to fear of lawsuits. The role of medical players theme refers to how doctors face many restrictions when performing abortions and may face criminal charges. In addition, the role of politics and religion refers to lawmakers’ and religious leaders’ role in deciding abortion rights. The life strategy theme refers to how many pro-life individuals would like the Supreme Court to reexamine the constitutionality of *Roe v. Wade* (1973), and demonstrates the importance of the role of the courts and justices in the abortion decision-making process.

TN: After

In TN, when looking at the six months after the legislative discussion of the heartbeat bill, 5 major themes present themselves. These are bias; women's health/rights vs. baby rights; republican/life arguments; role of medical players, politics, religion, public; life strategy, justice/courts role, constitutionality; pro-choice lawsuit, money for lawsuit; urgency/morality; and Democrats for life. The bias; women's health/rights vs. baby rights; Republican/life arguments; role of medical players, politics, and religion; and life strategy, justice/courts role, constitutionality themes represent the same concepts as in the *TN: Before* section above. The role of the public refers to various organizations and lobbyists on either side of the issue making their voices heard. The pro-choice lawsuit theme refers to how pro-choice organizations plan to sue pro-life legislation, and the money for lawsuit theme refers to considerations pro-life lawmakers must make when thinking about their legislation. The urgency/morality theme refers to the urgency that the heartbeat bills have caused in state legislatures either to pass restrictive abortion legislation or to pass legislation allowing women to receive abortions. There is a sense of morality when it comes to saving unborn children. Finally, the Democrats for life theme refers to discussions of Democrats that are pro-life.

NY: Before

In NY, when looking at the media coverage six months before the legislative discussion of the RHA, 8 major themes present themselves. These are urgency, fear/threat; role of politics in abortion; choice bias; political issue; women in government; abortion/reproductive rights; RHA and *Roe v. Wade* (1973), and female safety (Figure 11). The RHA is NY's way of protecting abortion rights for women regardless of what happens in The Supreme Court, which is present in the urgency, fear/threat theme. With the ideas of abortion as a political issue, the role of politics in abortion, and comparisons of the RHA and *Roe v. Wade* (1973) many articles discuss the

appointment of Brett Kavanaugh and how that can spell disaster for abortion rights in the country. The choice bias theme introduces ideas the articles put out in favor of abortion. The women in government theme is primarily in an article discussing NY senate races that only comprise women. This is portrayed as an amazing win for women; however, the article delves deep into society's expectations for women, especially the belief that women should support reproductive rights for all women. With the abortion/reproductive rights and female safety themes, the articles discuss abortion as a right and necessity for women.

NY: After

In NY, when looking at the six months after the legislative discussion of the RHA, 7 major themes present themselves (Figure 12). These are urgency, fear/threat; role of politics in abortion; choice bias, life bias; immorality of abortion; disappointment in Cuomo as a Catholic, and church vs. government (Figure 12). As mentioned in the *NY Before* section, the urgency, fear/threat theme refers to the need for the RHA because of Kavanaugh's appointment to The Supreme Court, and choice bias refers to ideas in the articles that demonstrate pro-choice views. On the other hand, life bias and immorality of abortion refer to ideas in the articles that demonstrate pro-life views. Role of politics in abortion refers to the role political players have in deciding various laws regarding abortion rights. Finally, disappointment in Cuomo as a Catholic and church vs. government refer to many Catholics feelings that Cuomo, as a Catholic, should not be supporting abortions and should be excommunicated.

Needle Exchange Articles - Major Themes

Major Themes in Needle Exchange Articles in TN	
6 Months Before Legislative Discussion	6 Months After Legislative Discussion
Personal Story - Coroner	Personal Story - Surgeon General
Drug Epidemic/Urgency	Drug Epidemic
Idea of Addicts	Solve Unemployment
	Lack of Politics in Health
	Lawmaker Goals
	Trump Administration
	Healthcare in Indiana

Figure 13: *Major Themes in Needle Exchange Articles in TN.* This figure shows the major themes present in needle exchange articles in TN 6 months before and after the legislative discussion of the bill in question.

Major Themes in Needle Exchange Articles in NY	
6 Months Before Legislative Discussion	6 Months After Legislative Discussion
Bias	Bias
Role of Politics	Role of Politics
Idea of Addicts	Idea of Addicts
HIV	HIV
Drug Users' Voice	Needle Exchange Success
China Policing	Morality
	Promote Drug Use
	Fear/Urgency

Figure 14: *Major Themes in Needle Exchange Articles in NY.* This figure shows the major themes present in needle exchange articles in NY 6 months before and after the legislative discussion of the bill in question.

Analysis of Results

TN: Before

In TN, when looking at the media coverage six months before the legislative discussion of SB0806, 3 major themes present themselves (Figure 13). These are personal story (coroner), drug epidemic/urgency, and idea of addicts. The personal story (coroner) and idea of addicts themes discuss how the coroner's own experiences of dealing with addicts led her to understand the hardships that drug addicts go through. The drug epidemic theme refers to an article that discusses how a coroner has made it her mission to work on the drug epidemic, and the urgency

theme refers to the importance of battling the drug epidemic as soon as possible. It is important to note that the article about the coroner's battle with the drug epidemic is the only article in this section.

TN: After

In TN, when looking at the six months after the legislative discussion of SB0806, 7 major themes present themselves (Figure 13). These are personal story (surgeon general), drug epidemic, solve unemployment, lack of politics in health, lawmaker goals, Trump administration, and healthcare in Indiana. The personal story (surgeon general) and lack of politics in health themes are present in an article discussing the appointment of a new surgeon general in 2017, Jerome Adams. The surgeon general's goal is to be apolitical, and his personal stories involving many family members with health issues has helped him see health as an apolitical issue. The solve unemployment theme refers to Adams' belief that addiction is a big cause of unemployment. Another article discusses the role of Indiana lawmakers in the Trump administration's healthcare team. This article discusses the Trump administration theme and the biases against them, as there is a lack of confidence in the administration's abilities. The drug epidemic theme is used to criticize the Trump administration for their lack of a response to the health issue. It also discusses healthcare in Indiana, including the state's lack of public health funding and the state's inexperience in dealing with various health issues, like the HIV epidemic in 2015. The lawmaker goals theme is present in various articles and demonstrates how important a lawmakers' goal is to the determination of health policies.

NY: Before

In NY, when looking at the media coverage six months before the legislative discussion, 6 major themes present themselves (Figure 14). These are bias, the role of politics, the idea of

addicts, HIV, drug users' voices, and China policing. The bias theme presents itself as biases against politicians who do not listen to medical evidence when deciding on health policy. The role of politics theme relates to the bias theme and, once again, demonstrates how important a lawmakers' goal is to the determination of health policies. The HIV theme refers to the importance of the HIV epidemic. The drug users' voice theme refers to an article that discusses the formation of a group, the Users Union, that serves as a lobbying group to fully represent the drug users' voices. The China policing term refers to an article discussing China's strict agenda regarding drug abusers and rehabilitation centers that rely more on fear and torture than on sound medical treatment. However, the article does mention that China is moving more towards medically-approved treatment programs. The idea of addicts theme presents itself in these articles in order to refer to China's negative view of drug addicts and to the stigma all of society puts on drug addicts. Another example of the theme is in an article discussing a pamphlet meant to inform drug addicts on how to use needles safely in an attempt to prevent the spread of HIV. However, many politicians see it as a way to perpetuate drug abuse.

NY: After

In NY, when looking at the six months after the legislative discussion, 6 major themes present themselves (Figure 14). These are bias, the role of politics, the idea of addicts, HIV, needle exchange success, morality, promote drug use, and fear/urgency. The bias theme once again presents itself as biases against politicians who do not listen to medical evidence when deciding on health policy. The role of politics theme relates to the biases theme and, once again, demonstrates how important a lawmakers' goal is to the determination of health policies. The idea of addicts theme in these articles presents drug addicts with descriptive imagery to point out that they are desperate for treatment but also for drugs. The HIV and needle exchange success

themes refer to many referrals of how needle exchange programs, including naloxone treatments, can help save drug addicts and HIV-positive individuals. The morality theme refers to the importance of needle exchange programs, naloxone treatments, and cooperation between clinics and law enforcement in order to solve the drug abuse epidemic. The promote drug use theme refers to an article that discusses the marketing of heroin packets. This article also discusses an art showcase that plans to depict these packets, leading to the fear theme. Finally, the urgency theme refers to the importance of treatment and the need for it to come sooner rather than later.

Discussion

This thesis answers the following questions: Are there any notable differences in how abortion and HIV/AIDS are portrayed in legislatures and in media articles? How does the media frame the health issues that have been brought into the public sphere through law? Do they replicate the frames and biases perpetuated by partisan politics or are they influenced by outside forces?

Abortion Legislation Major Themes

A few major themes emerge from the results and analysis, including differences in how abortion is viewed, what evidence is used, and what personal views are considered. The pro-choice side, along with NY, views abortion as a fundamental right, views it as a medical issue rather than a legal issue, and relies more on medical/research evidence. In contrast, the pro-life side views abortion as a legal issue and relies more on religious evidence. The pro-choice side and NY want abortion back in the medical sphere while the pro-life side aims to restrict abortion regulations with laws. Additionally, the pro-life side's reliance on religion demonstrates their reliance on faith to guide their political opinions.

Another theme from this research is whose rights are considered important in the abortion debate: women's rights or unborn baby's rights. The pro-choice side, along with NY, is concerned with protecting women's health. However, the pro-life side believes that abortion strips away the rights of unborn babies and that abortion is murder. Both sides are fighting for individual rights; however, the pro-life side's concern that abortion is murder demonstrates that they believe that abortion is morally incorrect. This argument of human rights brings into play the complicated debate of how to define a human being.

In the themes above, it is interesting to note that NY legislators' approach to abortion legislation is similar to the approach of pro-choice legislators. This may indicate that NY legislators hold more pro-choice views because the majority of NY residents hold pro-choice views. Meanwhile, because TN legislators do not share these views, it could indicate that the majority of TN residents hold pro-life views. This idea is also supported by the fact that the RHA represents pro-choice views while the HB0077 bill represents pro-life views. In addition, the HB0077 transcript does not contain as many testimonies against the bill, strengthening the idea that Tennessee residents are more likely to be pro-life. This finding shows that policymakers' actions are influenced by the general public.

While NY and TN differ in which side of the abortion debate the majority of legislators belong on, the states also have different focal points during legislative discussions. NY legislators focus on abortion as a crime and on the issue of state versus federal power. This may be because the RHA aims to legalize abortions; therefore, NY legislators may care more about how criminality laws related to abortion are affected. In TN, because the HB0077 bill aims to curtail abortion rights, the legislators focus more on how abortion represents murder. The RHA's goal is to guarantee abortion for NY women; therefore, the legislators are curious to see how the

RHA relates to *Roe v. Wade* (1973), the federal Supreme Court case that granted women the right to an abortion. In contrast, the HB0077 bill moves in the opposite direction of *Roe v. Wade* (1973). Therefore, the TN legislators are less interested in how their state laws interact with the federal law.

Finally, TN legislators focus on abortion as a monetary issue and the language of the bill. The focus on monetary issues may be because TN is a fiscally conservative state while the focus on the language of the bill relates once again to TN and pro-life legislators' goal to stop abortions.

Needle Exchange Legislation Major Themes

The results regarding the needle exchange bills show that, while TN legislators for needle exchange programs believe that the bill is important for various reasons, NY legislators focus on the necessity of needle exchange programs as a public health issue. This may indicate that NY legislators pay more attention to healthcare issues. However, NY legislators do not mention HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, or other diseases as much as TN legislators. This could indicate that NY legislators focused more on the drug abuse epidemic while TN legislators focused more on the impact needle exchange programs can have on various diseases. TN legislators, compared to NY legislators, are more concerned about drug users/abusers taking advantage of needle exchange programs, indicating that there is more stigma towards drug addiction in TN. Both states were equally concerned about various criticisms of the needle exchange programs.

When looking at the differences between people in support of or against needle exchange, the findings show that legislators against needle exchange programs are worried about how these programs can unintentionally benefit drug users. They are also very worried about the criminal aspects of these programs.

Differences between Legislative and Media Portrayal of Abortion and HIV

The legislative findings of the two issues show that legislators focused more on science when discussing the establishment of needle exchange programs. This may be because the HIV/AIDS movement formed in response to an epidemic; whereas, the pro-choice abortion movement formed in response to concerns regarding stripping of rights. HIV/AIDS may be considered a more scientific issue while abortion is an opinionated issue. In addition, HIV/AIDS legislative testimony contained many more instances of legislators asking clarifying questions, indicating that legislators are more open to changing their view on HIV/AIDS. In TN, there are also significantly fewer HIV/AIDS articles written than abortion articles. HIV/AIDS stigma may discourage its discussion, and abortion is a contentious issue, potentially leading to more articles. In addition, abortion articles contained more detail regarding the bill in question. The needle exchange articles talked more about drug addiction and the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the abstract; whereas, abortion articles seemed more intent on informing the reader on both sides of the issue. Again, the stigma towards HIV/AIDS may feed into the lack of concrete focus in the needle exchange articles.

Overall, these results show that abortion and HIV/AIDS are treated differently both by legislators and by media sources. Legislators focus less on science when abortion is being discussed while the media is more likely to inform readers of legislative information regarding abortion rather than HIV/AIDS. The stigma against HIV/AIDS and its more direct connection to science may explain these results. As media sources look to policy to inform their articles, they may be less willing to do so for HIV/AIDS. Overall, more research needs to be done to determine the specifics of how media sources frame issues compared to legislators. This thesis shows that media articles do seem to replicate the frames and biases perpetuated by partisan

politics. Abortion newspaper articles tend to have more political discussions, and lawmakers passionately debate the two political sides of abortion. Needle exchange newspaper articles seem to avoid political discussions, and lawmakers against needle exchange programs seem to stigmatize program participants. However, my findings demonstrate that media sources, as their own entity, choose focal points for each issue, as demonstrated by a needle exchange article with a focus on international issues. Media sources may turn to partisan politics to inform their articles, but they may not.

Conclusion

This thesis examines the legislative discussion of bills and newspaper articles to determine how abortion and HIV/AIDS differ and to determine how the legal arena and the media interact. By researching legislators' views, approaches, research, and focal points and examining newspaper articles' focus, overall approach to storytelling, and major themes, this thesis informs readers on the initial questions it aimed to answer. Overall, regardless of the shared politicization of the two issues, this thesis confirms that abortion and HIV/AIDS have their differences. HIV/AIDS, while more rooted in science, continues to struggle with stigma, blocking concrete discussions of issues. Abortion, heavily backed by opinion, struggles with scientific legitimacy due to the political domination of abortion frames. Media sources, going off of these images of the two issues, are more likely to discuss politics of abortion issues than of HIV/AIDS issues. Media sources also choose when to replicate the frames and biases perpetuated by partisan politics.

While this thesis is informative, it is important to consider potential limitations. First, while the author attempted to get rid of biases, these biases may have come into play, especially due to the qualitative nature of the study. Future researchers should aim to achieve a more

balanced view by having multiple authors with different perspectives analyze the data. In addition, future research should find ways to statistically prove significance of results. Another limitation of this thesis is that needle exchange programs may not be synonymous with abortion rights. The author struggled with finding HIV/AIDS legislation that had similar goals to the abortion legislation. Future research may need to address how to accurately compare these two different health issues. Overall, this thesis, despite its limitations, sheds light on the relationship between legislators and media journalists and between abortion and HIV/AIDS. Future research should continue to examine these two health issues in the context of the law and media because of the importance of these two fields to the public health approach.

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