Comradery after Calamity : *Bipartisan Rhetoric after 9/11*

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PS490: Senior Thesis Seminar

May 3, 2024

I.   <u>Abstract</u>

In the years following 9/11, bills concerning national security came out of Congress with a high bipartisan roll count vote rate. These are at the height of President George Bush's approval rating.This thesis examines the bipartisan rhetoric during floor debate of the Patriot Act, the Homeland Security Act, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, and the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002. Using content analysis, this thesis demonstrates how the President uses public support during a national tragedy to influence Congress to pass bills. Language will be identified using buzz words such as president, executive and Bush. Results show a trend of positive presidential rhetoric in the immediate aftermath of the events of 9/11, therefore indicating a rally-around-the-flag effect.

II.   <u>Introduction</u>

The purpose of this research paper is to examine the way bipartisan support has been affected by a national tragedy. In the United States, bipartisanship is atypical.[1] Members of Congress are typically locked into conflict with each other and bipartisanship does not receive much scholarly attention as it is a rarity.[2] This is apparent in the media with news coming out of Congress at any given time.[3] Bipartisanship occurs when a bill passing through Congress receives significant support from both parties in Congress.[4] This is when a bill is voted on and receives large amounts of votes from both Democrats and Republicans. This is significant as both parties must come to a consensus on the bill, even though each party holds their own, typically opposing ideology.

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[1] Peter Trubowitz and Nicole Mellow, "Going Bipartisan: Politics by Other Means,"*Political Science Quarterly* 120, no.3 (Fall 2005): 433-453, JSTOR
[2] Trubowitz and Mellow, "Going Bipartisan," 433
[3] Celia Paris, "Breaking Down Bipartisanship, When and Why Citizens React to Cooperation Across Party Lines" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 81, no. 2 (Summer 2017): 473-494, EBSCO
[4] Celia, "Breaking Down Bipartisanship," 474

However, after a national tragedy, bills coming out of Congress tend to have large margins of bipartisan support. For example, following the events of 9/11, Congress passed the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, establishing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).[5] This bill created security checkpoints in airports and other forms of transportation to protect the American people from future terrorist attacks. This bill is a significant example of bipartisan support as no Senators voting against the bill.[6] Why is it that following a national tragedy bills coming out of Congress have a large margin of bipartisan support? I hope to learn about what has caused such a high rate of bipartisan support in bills following the events of 9/11. Studying this phenomena will help achieve a framework with which we can look to in future national tragedies to predict Congressional behavior.

III.   Background

On the morning of September 11, 2001, four commercial aircrafts in the United States were hijacked by Al-Qaeda, an extremist terrorist group.[7] Two planes were purposely flown into the North and South towers of the World Trade Center, located in New York City.[8] A third plane hit the Pentagon and the fourth plane crashed in a field in western Pennsylvania that was presumably headed for the Capitol building.[9] These attacks are collectively referred to by the public and scholars as '9/11'. This is because these events took place on September 11th. In total across these attacks on various buildings and on aircrafts, 2,753 people were killed [10]. It is common belief that the World Trade Center was chosen by Al-Qaeda because of its status and

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[5] *U.S. Senate: U.S. Senate Roll Call Votes 107th Congress - 1st Session*. https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_votes/vote1071/vote_107_1_00295.htm
[6] *U.S. Senate: U.S. Senate Roll Call Votes*
[7] *9/11 FAQs | National September 11 Memorial & Museum*. (n.d.). https://www.911memorial.org/911-faqs
[8] *9/11 FAQs | National September 11 Memorial & Museum*
[9] *9/11 FAQs | National September 11 Memorial & Museum*
[10] *9/11 FAQs | National September 11 Memorial & Museum*

symbol of America's economic prosperity.[11] This is significant as the intent by the extremist terrorist group was to put the nation and Americans in fear.

In the time following the events of 9/11, major legislation targeting security and safety generally came out of Congress. One of these bills was The Patriot Act, casting a large net into the personal lives of Americans with broad government oversight.[12] In particular, the Patriot Act received a large margin of bipartisan support at 98 Senators voting Yea. [13] In order for a bill to become a law, it requires a majority vote in Congress. This is a simple majority in the Senate, with a total of 51 Senators voting Yea. Therefore, there must be some consensus or agreement on the bill at hand in order to obtain a voting majority and for the bill to become a law. Bipartisanship can be defined broadly as when a bill is supported by a majority of both parties in Congress[14]. The general nature of legislation coming out of Congress following 9/11 is significant because these bills often constrict civil liberties, such as The Patriot Act. It is engaging that bipartisan support on such legislation is high as it does not seem to be in the best interest of the American public.

There are two presiding theories on bipartisanship following a terrorist or national tragedy event that requires Congress to pass bills. The prominent theories are political alignment with the president, also known as a rally-around-the-flag effect, and crisis management theory.

IIII.   Literature Review

One scholar suggests that bipartisan support on bills is derived from political reasons, particularly political gain for a Member of Congress. This is called the rally-around-the-flag

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[11] *9/11 FAQs | National September 11 Memorial & Museum*
[12] *9/11 FAQs | National September 11 Memorial & Museum*
[13] https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_votes/vote1071/vote_107_1_00313.htm
[14] Celia Paris, "Breaking Down Bipartisanship, When and Why Citizens React to Cooperation Across Party Lines" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 81, no. 2 (Summer 2017): 473-494, EBSCO

effect and occurs when a president's approval rating from the public is high and thus causes high bipartisan support on bills during this high approval rating time frame.[15] This theory states that, in times of national crisis, popularity around the president increases, causing their approval rating to go up.[16] This is apparent in President George Bush's approval rating immediately following the events of 9/11. Before the events of 9/11 occurred, President Bush enjoyed a presidential approval rate that loomed in the 50 percent range, a typical approval rating for modern presidents.[17] However, following the events of 9/11, Bush's approval rating shot up a record high, from 51 to 86 percent.[18] In the days following 9/11, it shot up to 90 percent, the highest approval rating to be recorded.[19]

One scholar says this comes out of a patriotic sense that the nation adopts when there is a mass tragedy, such as a major terrorist attack on Americans.[20] This is because the president, in their role, becomes the focus of the nation as people look towards them for guidance and answers during such a tragedy. Thus, the public aligns themself with the president in the form of a high approval rating. Scholars say that this presidential approval has had a great influence over Congress. Scholars say, "a President's persuasive task, with congressmen and everyone else, is to induce them [Members of Congress] to believe that what he wants of them is what their own appraisal of their own responsibilities requires them to do in their interest, not his"[21]. This is significant as when the president's approval rating is high, it convinces Members of Congress to

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[15] Michael Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support in the 107th Congress," *Congress and the Presidency* 36, no. 3 (September 2009): 272-296

[16] Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support," 272.

[17] "Presidential Approval Ratings -- George W. Bush." Gallup.com, *Gallup*, news.gallup.com/poll/116500/presidential-approval-ratings-george-bush.aspx.

[18] "Presidential Approval Ratings -- George W. Bush."

[19] "Presidential Approval Ratings -- George W. Bush."

[20] Michael Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support in the 107th Congress," *Congress and the Presidency* 36, no. 3 (September 2009): 272-296

[21] Jeffry Burnam "The President and the Environment: A Reinterpretation of Neustadt's Theory of Presidential Leadership," *Congress & the Presidency* 37, no. 3 (Sept. 2010): 302–322. *EBSCOhost*.

align themselves with the president because it is in their best political interest. In addition, the president is cognizant of the power a high approval rating brings. As the public aligns themselves with the president in the form of a high approval rating, Members of Congress align themselves with the president for political gain. Thus, scholars argue that, "widespread popularity gives the president leeway and decreases resistance to his policies" [22] As such, public approval is a tool that the president can use to influence Congress in the ways that they want, thus creating bipartisan support on bills.

One scholar says that the primary reason for members of congress to follow the president is a reelection incentive.[23] This theory suggests that members of congress may choose to align themselves with the president, depending on presidential approval rating to increase chances of reelection.[24] For example, if a president has a low approval rating, Members of Congress may not be as quick to align themselves with the president's agenda. This is because the public may not approve of the president's actions, thus causing unpopularity. Members of Congress fear that aligning themselves with a president that is unpopular with the public will hurt their chances of reelection. Thus, reelection incentive drives Members of Congress in the way that they behave in Congress.[25] This reinforces the idea of Members of Congress aligning themselves with the president, because if it is in their best reelection interest to align with the president, Members of Congress will do so.

However, another school of thought from this scholar explaining the rally-around-the-flag effect is the idea of opposition leadership not being represented in the media.[26] The main idea of

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[22] Michael Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support in the 107th Congress," *Congress and the Presidency* 36, no. 3 (September 2009): 272-296
[23] Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support," 272.
[24] Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support," 272.
[25] Katz, J., & Sala, B. (1996). Careerism, Committee Assignments, and the Electoral Connection. American Political Science Review, 90(1), 21-33.
[26] Michael Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support in the 107th Congress," *Congress and the Presidency* 36, no. 3 (September 2009): 272-296

this theory is that while there is a rally-around-the-flag effect after a national tragedy, it does not come out of a patriotic public. It instead comes out of opposition leadership unwillingly to directly critique and speak out against the president in times of national crisis.[27] This circles back to reelection incentive as Members of Congress fear that not aligning themselves with a popular president will hurt their chances of reelection. As there is no opposition to the president during this critical time, it leads to media and news outlets only covering political leaders that align themselves with the president, therefore giving the appearance that there is no opposition to the president.[28] The public then interprets this one-sided media coverage as there is no opposition to the president and Members of Congress seem to be in agreement with each other. One scholar says that this, in turn, causes presidential power to increase.[29] This is significant as when there is no media coverage of opposition to the president, it gives the public the appearance of bipartisan support, thus causing the president's approval rating to increase. However, once opposition is shown, public approval rating falls as the public receives more opinions about the president's performance.[30] The public is then thus informed of other opinions expressed by the opposition leadership and make a better informed decision. This is significant as this only gives the illusion that there is bipartisan support on bills following a national crisis.

Scholars, however, say that both these theories behind political reasons for supporting the president have validity. This is because scholars say that the rally-around-the-flag accounts for the immediate response to a crisis while opposition leadership explains the duration in which the rally-around-the-flag effect occurs.[31] This demonstrates that political gain that comes from supporting the president accounts for the immediate response Members of Congress have to a

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[27] Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support," 272.
[28] Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support," 272.
[29] Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support," 272.
[30] Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support," 272.
[31] Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support," 272.

crisis, while the opposition leadership explains how long support around the president will occur.[32] This is significant as the rally-around-the-flag effect has a timeline in which it lasts and is shown to end when opposition leadership speaks out against the president. Thus, during the time in which the rally-around-the-flag-effect occurs, bills with high rates of bipartisan support come out of Congress.

In general, the idea of rallying around the president is significant to understanding bipartisan support. This is because we can look to the president to understand and analyze why Members of Congress vote in certain patterns.This school of thought would deduce that looking at high presidential approval ratings would correlate to congressional members aligning themselves with the president. It is important to note that this theory takes Members of Congress out of their respective party and instead looks at individuality. Therefore, this would make bipartisanship more apparent when the president's approval rating is high. One way to measure the rally-around-the-flag effect is to look at presidential approval ratings correlated with congressional votes on bills. If this school of thought is correct, it would be correct to say that when the President's approval rating is high after a national tragedy, there is little to no partisan divide on bills during this time. Thus, the rally-around-the-flag effect explains bipartisan support on bills following a national tragedy.

While the rally around the flag effect can explain bipartisan support after a terrorist event, scholars identify another school of thought that can be looked at as well. This is crisis governance behavior in Congress. Scholars identify that there are four major areas that a crisis must fulfill in order for a crisis governance behavior to occur.[33] First, a widely public event must

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[32] Rocca, "9/11 and Presidential Support," 272.

[33] Eric Posner and Adrian Vermeule. "Crisis Governance in the Administrative State: 9/11 and the Financial Meltdown of 2008," *University of Chicago Law Review* 76, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 1613–1681.

occur.[34] This is evident as the events of 9/11 involved the Twin Towers, two buildings in a densely populated area in which many people were killed. Second, the events of such a crisis must reveal a threat that ordinary citizens and experts know little to nothing about.[35] Before 9/11, most citizens did not know about terrorsism threats on American soil. Third, the threat revealed by such a crisis is complex, with the proper response being uncertain. Fourth, a general view emerges that the executive branch needs additional latitude to address the threat.[36] This occurred following the events of 9/11, where Congress the September 18th Authorization of Use of Military Force gave the executive authority to use "necessary and appropriate force" against al Qaeda.[37] This is significant as this authority was broad. Clearly, the events of 9/11 fulfill the four areas of a major crisis.

There are three stages in crisis management governance. Scholars say that the starting point of crisis government behavior in Congress is failure on the part of Members of Congress.[38] This is because Members of Congress are typically locked in partisan conflict of day-to-day politics. As they are locked in day-to-day politics, there is limited potential and outlook for future crises that could occur. Thus, this lack of planning leads to failure in the future when there is a crisis. An example of this is governmental spending and budgeting. Members of Congress often fail to reach agreements on spending, thus either causing a government shutdown or the threat of one.[39] Even though Members of Congress know that approval of spending and budgeting is always forthcoming, there are still threats of government shutdowns because of the failure to look further than day-to-day politics. This is significant as when these potential crises

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[34] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
[35] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
[36] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
[37] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
[38] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
[39] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613

arise, Members of Congress are left without guidance and planning as a result of a failure to look ahead and see potential problems.

However, this school of thought does not account for unanticipated events. Scholars say that in an unanticipated event, Members of Congress enact emergency laws and statutes with language that are vague.[40] This is significant as these laws are made hastily in response to an unanticipated event, such as a crisis. Scholars also contend that, "even if ex ante legal rules could perfectly anticipate all future events, legislatures will often lack the incentive to adopt them in advance".[41] This demonstrates that Members of Congress lack future planning when it comes to potential crises that may occur. This, once again, ties back to the concept that Members of Congress are so focused on day-to-day partisanship and issues that they lack the planning for forthcoming crises. Thus, this regulates Members of Congress to a reactive role, rather than a proactive one when it comes to a crisis.

The second stage of crisis governance as a way to explain congressional behavior is the very structure of congress as it relates to bill-making.[42] Congress has numerous internal structures and procedures for bills moving through a particular house.[43] These structures are intense and bills are often regulated to various subcommittees and hearings that delay its movement in Congress. This is significant as it is the bureaucracy of Congress that limits the swiftness of Members of Congress to react to a crisis.[44] As demonstrated that Members of Congress fail to act proactively, they are limited to reactively in a crisis and thus confined to the bureaucracy of the structure of Congress.

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40 Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
41 Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
42 Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
43 Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
44 Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613

In the third stage of a crisis governance, scholars say the Members of Congress delegate large authority to the President.[45] This is as a result of Congress being confined to a reactive role and at the mercy of bureaucracy. Scholars say that Congress, "writes new statutes delegating broad powers to the executive to handle the crisis. It is simplistic to say, and we do not claim, that legislatures write the executive a blank check".[46] This is significant because Congress gives the president a wide authority in which to act when a crisis occurs. This delegation of power is not in the best interest of Congress. This is because it takes away the bureaucracy of Congress. Scholars say, "Congress's usual built-in advantage—inertia, or the ability of legislative leaders and interest groups to kill proposals at vetogates and thereby do nothing at all—is ruled out by politics".[47] This is significant as the ability of Members of Congress to negotiate and work out details of bills is taken away and given to the executive. However, scholars say this comes out of the public response.[48] The public is often motivated by fear and urgency. Thus, Members of Congress understand that their constituents want urgency and this must correlate to action.[49] This is significant as Members of Congress delegate this action to the President for swiftness purposes that cannot be achieved in Congress. Therefore, the executive is given large authority in which to act in the final stage of a crisis governance.

A way to measure crisis governance would be to look at a major event or crisis and follow political action and rhetoric following the crisis. First, the event must fit the four criteria outlined to make it a crisis. Then, it would need to follow the three stages. The first stage is failure on the part of Members of Congress. Looking towards actions of Congress, there would need to be little to no laws in place governing or addressing the nature of the crisis, before the

[45] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
[46] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
[47] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
[48] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613
[49] Poser and Vermeule, "Crisis Governance," 1613

crisis takes place. The second stage is the structure of Congress. While the structure of Congress does not change considerably day-to-day, it is safe to assume that Congress will remain a bureaucracy for the foreseeable future. The third stage is a large delegation of power to the President. This can be measured by looking at bills following a crisis and the power that is given to the president in such bills. Therefore, should these actions occur after a crisis, it is safe to assume that Members of Congress are exhibiting crisis governance behavior.

In conclusion, both the rally-around-the-flag effect and crisis governance seek to explain bipartisanship following a national crisis. The rally-around-the-flag effect explains how political gain influences Members of Congress into exhibiting bipartisanship and the duration in which this will occur. The crisis governance effect outlines the features of a crisis and explains the stages in which Members of Congress will act. Both these theories are key to understanding bipartisan support after a crisis, such as 9/11, and the direct effect it has on bills.

Ultimately, I believe that the rally-around-the-flag effect best explains bipartisan support after a national crisis. This effect explains why Members of Congress chose to align themselves with the President and the timeline in which this bipartisan support occurs. The rally-around-the-flag effect takes into account why Members of Congress will align themselves with the President for reelection incentive. Crisis governance does not take the motivations behind bipartisan support into account and only explains how Congress delegates broad power to the Executive based on their own failure. This does not explain the starting position on why Members of Congress would choose to delegate broad power to the executive. This also does not explain why bipartisan support occurs, only that Members of Congress fail to act. The rally-around-the-flag effect explains the starting position on why Members of Congress will align with the President, predicated on capitalizing on the President's power.

In addition, the rally-around-the-flag effect establishes a timeline in which bipartisan support will occur. Bipartisanship will drop when there is a fall in positive presidential rhetoric combined with a fall in the president's approval rating. This is a way to measure how long bipartisan support will occur after a national tragedy. The crisis governance theory ends once Members of Congress delegate wide authority to the Executive and thus does not give a timeline in which bipartisan support occurs. Thus, the rally around the flag effect best illustrates bipartisan support after the events of 9/11.

IV.   Analytical Framework

The rally-around-the-flag effect provides us a framework for which to look at bipartisan support in the wake of a national crisis. Looking at the literature, there are two claims that can be drawn. First, following a national crisis combined with the president's approval rating being high, bills coming out of Congress will have high levels of bipartisan support. To operationalize this, there are four key indicators that need to be measured. The first indicator is the existence of a national tragedy. As defined in the literature, this tragedy needs to be highly visible to the public. Thus, my case study will be the events of 9/11, a widely visible public tragedy that gripped the nation. The second is the President's approval rating increase. In the rally-around-the-flag effect, a President's approval rating immediately following a national tragedy will increase as the public feels patriotic and looks to the President for guidance and support during this time. To measure this, a president's approval rating needs to be measured before and after a national tragedy on a month by month basis. Before a national crisis, a President should have an average approval rating, found around the 50th percentile for modern presidents. Following a national tragedy, there should be a significant increase in the President's

approval rating. This is a high jump to around the 80th or higher percentile. Thirdly, debate

surrounding these bills will contain rhetoric that supports the president. Floor debate in the

Senate will demonstrate Senators calling for their fellow Congress people to support the

President's efforts.This is the President using their power to influence Congress. The fourth is

bills coming out of Congress immediately following a national crisis. If my claim is correct, bills

immediately following a national tragedy will have a significant increase in bipartisan support as

opposed to before the tragedy. This will mean that a significant amount of both parties in

Congress will support the bill being presented.

My second claim is that when there is a fall in positive rhetoric surrounding supporting

the President, we will see a drop in bipartisan support in Congress. An indicator of this would be

to look at floor debates in Congress on bills directly related to 9/11. Bills are continuously

debated and time forever progresses. As there is less positive rhetoric surrounding supporting the

President, bills will have decreased bipartisan support as opposed to the bills before them. This

would indicate that the rally-around-the-flag effect is coming to an end and therefore, a drop in

bipartisan support will occur. This will also correlate with the President's approval rating

decreasing. As the President no longer has a high approval rating in which to influence Congress,

we will see a fall in positive rhetoric surrounding the President.

VI.   Methods:

The method I used for my data collection is multifaceted and will have qualitative and

quantitative data. In order to show a rally-around-the-flag effect, we must look at the executive

branch and its power. First, I will look at President Bush's approval rating in the months

following 9/11. As demonstrated in Table 1, this data can be obtained from national polling

sources. Using this data, I identified the increase and peak of Bush's approval rating and the subsequent decrease. This data is used to identify the months in which Bush's approval rating was high. This will be around the 80 percent to 90 percent mark. This data will demonstrate that after a national tragedy, a president's approval rating will increase, confirming a rally-around-the-flag effect. When this data is identified, I will look at the months in which this increase was visible. These months will demonstrate that the President used their high approval ratings to influence Congress, demonstrating a rally-around-the-flag-effect and that the President capitalized on this power. This is a qualitative analysis to obtain the percentage and which months the President's approval rating was high.

Table 1

Concept/Data Point	*Source*	*Operationalization*
National Tragedy	Case Study	9/11 - Tragedy with many deaths - Highly visible by the public
Presidential Approval Rating	Gallup Presidential Approval Rating	Increase and Decrease Following National Tragedy - Month by Month Basis
Floor Debate in Senate	Congressional Record (congress.gov)	Positive Rhetoric Examples: - Support Bush - Support President - Follow the President
Bills Following a National Tragedy	Congressional Record (congress.gov)	Bipartisan Support - Bills with more than 70%

		- Bills such as Patriot Act, TSA Act, etc.

Once months are obtained, I will look at bills coming out of Congress in this time frame. I will then constrict the bills to only those that directly address the national tragedy to limit the scope of my research. For example, these bills will address 9/11 by establishing new security measures and surveillance policies. This is because 9/11 demonstrated security flaws in American society that most citizens were not aware of. I have limited myself to a few key bills that were introduced as a result of 9/11 and became laws. These bills are the Patriot Act, the Homeland Security Act, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002.

Next, I will look at floor debate surrounding these bills by Members of Congress As demonstrated in Table 1, I will then look at these speeches for content analysis and specific language used about the executive branch. Floor debate can be obtained from the Congressional record. In these debates, I will identify rhetoric that is in support of the president. Indicators of this will include alluding to the executive branch in a positive light, directly or indirectly. First I will search for the keywords "Bush","Executive" and "President". I will then identify the context in which they are used. If they are used in a positive context, I will count it as a time in which there is positive rhetoric. If the context in which it is used is negative, I will count it as a time in which there is negative rhetoric. If the key words are used in a matter of fact way or as a point of information, they will be counted as purely administrative rhetoric. While administrative rhetoric counts may not be used for analysis later, they will be collected for future research purposes.

Using this data, I will compile a timeline in which positive presidential rhetoric will be mapped upon bipartisan support on the few key bills. This data will then demonstrate the

correlation between bipartisan support and the power of the president following a national

tragedy. This will correlate the trend that when a President's approval rating is high, bipartisan

support will also be high. I define high levels of bipartisan support as bills that have a 70% or

more Yea vote count. In order for a bill to pass, a simple majority needs to be achieved. This is

51% of Senators voting Yea. As such, a 70% Yea count on a vote indicates that a majority of

both parties came to a consensus on the bill, thus demonstrating bipartisan support.

      To summarize, I will be performing a content analysis on floor debate on key bills

following 9/11. If there is a high percentage of bipartisan rhetoric along with a high bipartisan

roll call vote, it will be evidence of a rally-around-the-flag effect. If there is a low amount of

bipartisan rhetoric, then there is no evidence of a rally-around-the-flag effect.

VII. Data Collection

Table 2

Bill	Buzzword	Count
The Patriot Act Voted on Oct 25, 2001 Approval Rating: 88% Roll Count Vote 98-1	Bush	2-positive 2-negative
	President	8-positive 4-negative
	Executive	2-positive 6-negative

Table 3

Bill	Buzzword	Count
The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act	Bush	0-positive 3-negative
	President	1-positive

Voted on July 9, 2008 Approval Rating: 31% Roll Count Vote: 69-28	Executive	15- negative 0- positive 2-negative

Table 4

Bill	Buzzword	Count
Homeland Security Act Voted on November 19, 2002 Approval Rating: 66% Roll Count Vote: 90 -9	Bush	7-positive 6-negative
	President	73- positive 47-negative
	Executive	3- positive 7- negative

Table 5

Bill	Buzzword	Count
the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 Voted on 10/11/2002 Approval Rating: 62% Roll Count Vote: 77-23	Bush	57-positive 21-negative
	President	212- positive 107- negative
	Executive	4- positive 11-negative

VIII. Analysis

After conducting data collection, general results demonstrate a rally-around-the-flag

effect when President Bush's approval rating is high as compared to lower points. When

conducting data collection on the Patriot Act, President Bush had an approval rating of 88

percent. This rating is the second highest in the history of his administration. In the language of the Patriot Act, the word 'Bush' (in reference to President Bush) is used in a positive nature twice, and also negatively twice. While this does not give much indication of a rally-around-the-flag effect, looking at the word 'President' gives indication. In floor debate, 'President' is used positively in eight instances as compared to four negative instances. This demonstrates a lean towards negative rhetoric involving the President. In addition, the word 'Executive' is used twice positively and six times negatively. Furthermore, the roll count vote for the Patriot Act was 98 to one. This is a large margin of bipartisan support as nearly all Senators voted for the bill. This is an indicator that President Bush used his power of a high approval rating to compel Congress to pass bills. This is significant because it demonstrates a rally-around-the-flag effect as Members of Congress used the term 'President' to demonstrate their support for President Bush, thus leading to a high rate of bipartisan support on the bill, and the bill becoming a law.

Furthermore in data collection, the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 demonstrates a varied effect. In debate, the word 'Bush' is used positively in 57 instances as compared to 21 negative instances. In addition, in using the word 'Executive' it is only used positively in 4 instances as compared to 11 negative instances. Along with this, the term 'President' is used positively 212 times and negatively 107 times. Here, data suggests a departure from the rally-around-the-flag effect as rhetoric becomes increasingly more negative as compared to the Patriot Act. This is evident as President Bush's approval rating fell to 62 percent, a significant decrease from a 88 percent high during the Patriot Act. However, roll count vote on Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 demonstrates a large margin of bipartisan support as 77 Senators voted Yea on the bill and 23 Senators voted

Nay. This is notable as while President Bush's approval rating falls, there is still a significant amount of bipartisan rhetoric, thus causing a large margin of bipartisan support.

Furthermore, in interpreting the data for the Homeland Security Act, results are varied for a rally-around-the-flag effect. In debate, the word 'Bush' is used positively in seven instances and negatively in six instances. In addition, when looking at the term 'Executive' it is used positively only three times as compared to seven instances negatively. Additionally, the word 'President' is used positively 73 times and negatively in 47 instances. In all these keywords, it is clear the rhetoric leans more positively towards President Bush. During the debate of this bill, President Bush's approval rating fell to 66 percent. While this approval rating is lower, it is clear that the rally-around-the-flag effect is occurring as the roll count vote for the bill is 90 Yeas to 9 Nays.

In debate surrounding the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, results are indicative of a rally-around-the-flag effect. During this time, President Bush's approval rating fell to 31 percent. Language used during debate certainly reflects this shift in approval rating. During floor debate, 'Bush' was not used in a positive manner and rather only used in a negative context three times. In addition, 'President' was used only once positively as compared to 15 times when used negatively. This is a clear indication that as President Bush's approval rating fell, he lacked the power to influence Congress, thus causing low amounts of bipartisan rhetoric. Furthermore, 'Executive' was not used in a positive way and was rather used twice negatively. This gives further indication that the rally-around-the-flag effect has ended and confirms the hypothesis that when the President's approval rating falls, there is a decrease in bipartisan rhetoric, thus causing a decrease in bipartisanship in the roll count vote of the bill. This is apparent in the Foreign

Intelligence Surveillance Act as President Bush's approval rating was 31 percent and the roll count vote on the bill was 69 Yeas to 28 Nays.

Overall, both hypotheses are confirmed using the data. First, bills following a national crisis, combined with the President's approval rating being high, will have a large margin of bipartisan support. This is apparent as the higher President's Bush approval rating, the larger the margin of bipartisan support in the form of a high roll count vote. For example, during debate of the Patriot Act, President Bush's approval rating was 88 percent and the subsequent roll count vote on the bill was 90 to 9. This further reinforces my second claim as when there is a fall in positive rhetoric surrounding supporting the President, we will see a drop in bipartisan support in Congress. This is apparent in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act as rhetoric shifts negatively as compared to the other bills and roll count vote demonstrates a lower amount of bipartisan support as the vote was 69 to 28. Thus, the rally-around-the-flag-effect is observable.

IX. <u>Conclusion</u>

In conclusion, the rally-around-the-flag-effect is observable in the bills addressing 9/11. When the President's approval rating is high, Members of Congress allude to the President in a positive way thus causing a large margin of bipartisan support in the form of a high roll count vote rate. In addition, when there is a fall in the President's approval rating, there is a decrease in positive rhetoric and thus a decrease in the roll count vote. Further research can include linguistic examinations on word choice and motive behind why certain words are used more positively than negatively. In addition, checks for reliability can also be conducted.