

arouse emotions, and influence decision-making (Vladimir Dosev, pp. 120–22). Constructing the (corrupt) Cameroonian president as a “father figure” perpetuates the myth that any attack on him is a “smear campaign to tarnish the image of Cameroon” (Eric A. Anchimbe, p. 139). Similarly, Obama’s promised change in the Middle East was mere “deceptive rhetoric” (Ibrahim El-Hussari, p. 209) because by declaring a standpoint (criticising Israel) taboo (“Israel’s legitimacy is not a matter for debate”, cited on p. 210), Obama violates the norms of rational argumentation. It is also through metaphor (“war is medicine”) that Israel’s state of perpetual war with its neighbours is normalised, sanitized, and depicted as a worthy act of bravery (Dalia Gavrieli-Nuri, pp. 225–32).

Finally, a growing tendency to commodify genres through the process of hybridisation is well-attested in everyday political communication. The media’s juxtaposition of written text and videos in online newspapers “hybridizes and transforms news genres and the journalistic stances” they express (Marjut Johansson, p. 62). Similarly, in commemoration discourse multimodality is a key factor to convey ceremonial reverence (Christoph Sauer, p. 246).

(Received 28 August 2013)

Language in Society 43 (2014)
doi:10.1017/S0047404514000323

CLAUDIA STRAUSS, *Making sense of public opinion: American discourses about immigration and social programs*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. xxviii, 424. Hb. \$89.10.

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Claudia Strauss has investigated a variety of the immigration and social welfare discourses that shape public opinion. As conventional discourses are “oft-repeated, shared schemas” (15) for people’s opinion statements, conventional discourse analysis has become a very useful method for social researchers interested in opinion statements from any source, written or spoken. Based on in-depth interviews with twenty-seven interviewees from North Carolina in 2000 and 2005, these case studies look into contemporary vernacular discourses in the US regarding key issues in immigration and government social programs. Each case study described includes the terms of the basic schema of the discourse in question, features of expression in the discourse, and examples from the interviews and national sources such as editorials, blogs, advocacy groups’ websites, and national surveys.

To solve the “mysteries of public opinion” (20), the book aims to be theoretical, descriptive, and applied, with three sections (fourteen chapters). Part I contextualizes conventional-discourse analysis with qualitative and quantitative perspectives: Ch. 1 reveals the relationship between people’s opinion and conventional discourses; Ch. 2 presents sources and methods of conventional discourse analysis with three steps identified for such analysis; Ch. 3 reveals how conventional discourses are influenced by personal lives, such as interviewees’ identities, opinion communities, life experiences, and the discourses they have used, as well as by the ways they interpret and combine discourses. Parts II and III describe immigration discourses and social welfare discourses respectively, with each reviewing related research first. Part II (Chs. 4–8) is devoted to immigration discourses: reviewing previous research of attitudes about immigration (Ch. 4) and describing five discourses about immigration, namely, economic discourses (Ch. 5), legal/national security discourses (Ch. 6), discourses about culture (Ch. 7), and discourses that put the issue of immigration in a larger context (Ch. 8). Part III (Chs. 9–13) deals with social welfare policies—reviewing previous research on Americans’ opinions about government social programs (Ch. 9) and presenting four groups of discourses: discourses critical of government programs (Ch. 10), discourses about personal responsibility for fulfilling one’s needs (Ch. 11), discourses about the roles of family, community, and nation regarding collective insecurity (Ch. 12), and discourses about the social causes of economic insecurity (Ch. 13).

Part IV (Ch. 14) summarizes the study by reviewing the theoretical questions and proposing suggestions for future study and practical applications for survey research, political advocacy, and interpersonal dialogue. The thirteen figures illustrate various opinions and discourses while the three appendices enhance the approaches with tables and texts, making the book a comprehensive work. With practical methods and authentic data, this book is a very inspiring contribution to discourse research and is accessible to students, social researchers, and even politicians.

(Received 29 August 2013)