LGBT RIGHTS IN FOREIGN POLICY: THE CASE OF THE UNITED STATES

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2. SUMMARY

In recent years, a lot of political attention has been paid to LGBT- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender persons equality worldwide (also known as SOGI- sexual orientation and gender identity). The United Nations Human Rights Council adopted the LGBT resolution in September 2014 and it was supported by many governments around the world, including the United States which has actively been pushing for LGBT issues to be discussed in global forums. Recently it has become a more prominent international relations problem when other states have started aligning with the Western idea of modernity and equality which are perceived as the active proponents of LGBT equality agenda. International action and support over the LGBT issue gained a lot of attention and because of it a backlash occurred- some countries aligning themselves as protectors of LGBT rights and others as the opposition to such rights. The United States was the first country to release a global strategy in 2011.12.16 presidential memorandum to battling LGBT discriminations but how does this Western power shape this problem and how does it frame the issue in regard to itself and other states?

This paper seeks to research how the LGBT issues are constructed and perceived during the presidency of Barak Obama. The aims of this research are: (1) to make a methodological framework to aid the analysis; (2) to analyse LGBT human rights issue framing in the United States during B.Obama’s administration before the presidential memorandum of 2011.12-06, and (3) to analyse LGBT human rights issue framing in the United States during B.Obama’s administration after the memorandum of 2011.12.06. The main goal of the paper is to see how these perceptions are formulated in the selected period’s rhetoric.

In the paper, constructivism was the main theory of international relations used. Other theories include work done on international norm diffusion by Katherine Sikkink et al., and coercive rhetoric theory to help analyse the effect of the speeches. 16 documents and fact sheets published by the United States government were analysed, along with 2630 speeches of B. Obama and other governmental officials. The documents and speeches were analysed using content and document analysis methods and the research provided answers according to a pre-determined set of criteria: (1) whether LGBT rights are framed as a human rights issue; (2) how exactly LGBT rights
are framed as a human rights problem, (3) whether some countries are named as violating LGBT rights more than other in the view of the U.S.; (4) what action plan the U.S. proposes to the global community in the context of LGBT rights issue; (5) how does the U.S. positions itself regarding this issue.

The results of the research confirm the hypothesis that the U.S. officials frame LGBT rights only as human rights by framing the LGBT community to be within the vulnerable group of minorities. The results showed a contrastive framing of LGBT issues, presenting some states as the opposition to these rights and urging other states to take sides. B. Obama, H.Clinton, and other officials primarily stressed the U.S. role as the role of a leader facing this issue.
3. SANTRAUKA


Šio magistrinio darbo tikslas yra išsiaiškinti kaip buvo vaizduojama LGBT teisių problema Barako Obamos kadencijų laikotarpiais, atsakant į iškeltus uždavinius: (1) sudaryti atitinkamą tyrimo strategiją; (2) išanalizuoti LGBT teisių problemos vaizdavimą B.Obamos kadencijos laikotarpiu iki 2011.12.06 memorandumu; (3) išanalizuoti LGBT teisių problemos vaizdavimą B.Obamos kadencijos laikotarpiu po 2011.12.06 memorandumu.

Tyrimas buvo atliekamas naudojant konstruktyvistinės tarptautinių santykių teorijos perspektyvą ir pasitelkiant turinio analizės metodus, bei pasitelkiant tarptautinių normų teorijas aprašytas Katerinos Sikkink ir retorikos teoriją. Iš viso buvo išanalizuota: 18 strateginių dokumentų ir 2630 JAV prezidento B. Obamos kalbų. Tyrimas pateikia atsakymus į 5 analizės aspektus: (1) ar LGBT vaizduojamos kaip žmogaus teisės atsakant (2) jeigu taip, tai kaip LGBT vyra aizduojamos kaip žmogaus teisės, (3) ar kalbose ir dokumentuose vienos valstybės vaizduojamos kaip didesnės LBT teisių pažeidėjos nei kitos valstybės, (4) kokį veiksmų planą JAV siūlo LGBT teisių problemai spręsti, (5) kur save pozicionuojā JAV LGBT teisių problemas atžvilgiu.

Rezultatai patvirtino įgumų teiginį, jog LGBT teisės įsvaizduojamos kaip žmogaus teisės ir LGBT bendruomenė priskiriama diskriminuojamų pažeidžiamų mažumų grupei. LGBT teisės vaizduojamos kontrastuojant žmogaus teisių pažeidimų sunkumą ir raginant kitas valstybes rinktis,
kurion pusėn stoti šios problemos klausimu. Rezultatuose atspindi jog JAV valstybės pareigūnai kalbėjo apie JAV vaidmenį LGBT teisių klausimu kaip apie labai svarbų arba patį svarbiausią, pabrėžiant nugalėtojo ir lyderio vaidmenį.
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5. INTRODUCTION

Human rights have changed a lot in the recent years and have come to include LGBT rights. LGBT is an acronym that refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons.\(^1\) This paper will discuss the very active LGBT rights discourse in the United States rhetoric, because this topic is very novel, controversial, and only now becoming widely discussed by scholars across various different fields. Scholars have been discussing how different issues are formulated as human rights issues in an attempt to bring more attention to them for years, such as Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink with their work on human rights and norm diffusion in the world.\(^2\) But LGBT rights is very controversial for different countries with different cultures and religions, so as a global norm does not exist yet, but the United States was the first country to officially include LBT right protection under its foreign policy goals, as well as the first country to declare in from of UN general assembly that gay rights are human rights. This unprecedented move calls for closer inspection, since looking gay movements, it can be seen how the history of gay movements that many civil society organizations have been advocating, but no country has done what the U.S. did. Therefore, this is new ground in terms of research, where interdisciplinary research should be done, looking back as cultural factors, sociology and gender, politics and many other factors. From the perspective of international relations, the topic of LGBT can be looked out trying to see how this newly introduced issue shapes relation between the proponents and other actors. The U.S. is a state that advocates for LGBT, therefore, it is interesting to try and see how this advocating started in the Obama’s administration, since nothing similar was happening under Bush. And moreover, trying to look at what construction of LGBT problem is reflected in the rhetoric of Obama’s administration could help add insight into the phenomenon that the media and scholars now call “World War LGBT”.\(^3\)

The United States as a great power and a leading actor in diffusing human rights norms globally was the first state to officially adopt LGBT rights discourse as human rights discourse. Sexuality politics and LGBT rights require us to look at how international norms function as from the very foundation of our society and splits communities into oppositional groups. It can be defined as the most prominent boundary in global politics nowadays and looking at how the United

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\(^1\) Oxford English Living Dictionaries. 2017 Oxford University Press. https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/lgbt
States deal with it via a constructivist lens is an interesting way to see how LGBT politics is perceived by states and how it can also help shape state identities. LGBT advocates on various levels (regional, national or local) have been actively participating in talks about sexual rights and pursuing global goals and thus, the backlash can be explained by this increased visibility of the LGBT community. Even though LGBT movements started up earlier (the sixties and seventies), since the nineties, they have been going for global recognition choosing to advocate for gay rights as part of human rights, and that changed everything. LGBT rights issue entered into the front of international relations, because it started affecting relations between countries.

This paper raises the question of how the U.S. perceives itself and others in regard to the issue of LGBT rights. Moreover, how does the U.S. shape the problem itself and how is the problem framed are also important questions to ask, because having the influence and power that the U.S. has, it ought to be aware of the effect it has on other countries. These questions all come together to the problem of the research.

**Research problem:** How does the United States frame the issue of LGBT rights?

**Research object:** LGBT rights in United States rhetoric

**Goal and tasks of the research:** The goal is to analyse how the LGBT issues are constructed and perceived during the presidency of Barak Obama. To reach the goal, the following tasks were formulated:

1. To define the main features of constructivism and make a strategy for analysing the rhetoric of Obama’s administration

2. Assess whether LGBT rights are framed a human rights issue in the rhetoric of Obama’s administration

3. Explore how exactly LGBT rights are framed as a human rights problem in the rhetoric of Obama’s administration

4. To assess whether some countries are named as violating LGBT rights more than other in the rhetoric of Obama’s administration

5. To explore what action plan the U.S. proposes to the global community in the context of LGBT rights issues in the rhetoric of Obama’s administration
6. To analyse where the U.S. positions itself regarding this issue in the rhetoric of Obama’s administration

**Hypothesis:** LGBT rights are framed as human rights in the rhetoric of Obama’s administration positioning the United States as the main advocate for LGBT rights internationally.

**Research methods:** Content analysis and document analysis were the main methods of research. This paper uses speeches, joint and not joint statements, public remarks made by president Obama, as well as speeches and remarks made by relevant members of his administration. Document analysis proved to be difficult, because the sources available are very limited, due to the topic being new. They consist of U.S. issued fact sheets that contain descriptions of programs that are being conducted. Introductions to country reports on human rights practices are also included to get a rounded and full view of the chosen problem. Overall, 2630 speeches and 16 documents were analysed, separating the analysed periods into two. More speeches were analysed proportionally in first period since it served as keyword-determining. Subsection 1.4 discusses used methods in more detail and how they were used to see how LGBT rights were framed during the Obama administration.

**Research novelty and sources:** Many primary sources were used in the paper for remarks and documents all are found on official governmental websites that have been archived after the change of presidency. Scholarly literature on this topic proved difficult to find, which is why most sources are articles from recently published journals and recent research publications by foreign universities. The most useful work found on the topic was Remkus Brett dissertation on the topic “LGBT Right in Contemporary Global Politics: Norms, Identity, and the Politics of Rights” where he discusses the topic philosophical terms, but nonetheless provides a comprehensive outline of the issues of LGBT rights, politics of identity and politics of rights; these topics were precisely the aim of this paper. Other authors that discuss identity politics and norm diffusion in the world that were used in the paper include: K. Sikkink, T.Risse, S. Snyder, A. Simmons. As for Lithuanian databases, the topic of LGBT in politics is almost impossible to find; therefore foreign databases are used almost exclusively. Only several Lithuanian scholars, such as D.Jakniūnaitė are used in the paper while discussing the theory of constructivism. Alexander Wendt was used as the main constructivist author, and Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and Ronald R. Krebs rhetoric theory was used to analyse the data.

**Structure of the paper:** The paper is structured into three main sections. The first section serves to answer the first task of the paper- define the main features of constructivism and make a strategy for
analysing the rhetoric of Obama’s administration. To achieve this, the chapter is divided into two sections and subsections to cover all the necessary theoretical material such as human rights, norm diffusion and political rhetoric. The second and third chapters fulfil the rest of the tasks together, but are instead split into two period of analysis, paying attention to a historical memorandum regarding the LGBT community that B. Obama released in December, 2011; thus making this date the splitting point for the chapters. The third chapter also contains subchapters analysing in detail the documents released in that period to answer questions raised in the tasks.
1. ANALYSING THE USE OF LGBT RIGHTS DISCOURSE USING CONSTRUCTIVISM

Scientific analysis heavily depends on the theoretical lens that is chosen. This section presents the constructivist international relations theory and contains an elaboration as to why it was chosen for this particular analysis. Gender discourse in politics and international relations can be analysed in several different ways and using different theoretical approaches. This particular paper uses the constructivist approach, due to the novelty of LGBT as a topic in international relations and the dynamic with which constructivism allows to analyse a subject. This section details the concepts under which constructivism operates, what place gender and human rights occupy in the constructivist discourse, the problems that arise while using constructivist analysis approach.

5.1 Social constructivism in international relations

Social constructivism as a theory is very broad, firstly because it is primarily a sociological theory and a philosophy of knowing. Social constructivism at its core is the idea that there is no fixed meaning in anything:

_Social theory is the more general theory about the social world, about social action, and about the relationship between structures and actors. Substantive IR theory is theory about some aspect of international relations. Constructivism is both a social theory and a number of different substantive theories of IR._

At the core of constructivism within international relations lie concepts of ‘identity’ and ‘idea’. Constructivism puts ideas and identities on the centre stage and allows scientists to look at social effects and how they shape international relations, meaning decisions and objectives, rather than making ideas and ideology one of the variables. The lens that constructivism provides, concentrates on ‘immaterial influences and their importance in politics and their transformational capacity’.

The following subsection focuses on the main authors and ideas of constructivism, beginning with the emergence of social constructivism among IR scholars moving on to authors and concepts that are relevant for this paper.

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5 Ibid

First of all, for the purposes of introducing constructivism, Nicholas Onuf and Alexander Wendt have to be introduced. Social Constructivism was first coined by Nicholas Onuf in 1989 in ‘World of Our Making: rules and rule in social theory and international relations’ while Alexander Wendt was the one who made the theory more elaborate and popular, attracting many followers.\(^7\) It is worth noting that Onuf was not the only one to be interested in constructivism—many other scholars in other social science disciplines were working on their respective views within those fields. For example, Giddens and his agent vs. structure work in sociology is also directly corresponds to the IR constructivist writings, because it deals with the same construction of reality dilemma.\(^8\)

As mentioned before, Wendt was the one that elaborated the most on constructivism via criticism of other available international relations theories and their inapplicability to explain events and actions of states.\(^9\) Wendt argued that there are three main elements that unite social structures: shared knowledge, material resources, and practices. He wrote that common knowledge is what defines a structure. This common knowledge in other words is called intersubjective beliefs. In other words, the level of cooperativeness or conflict will be determined by how it is seen by the actors involved, either it be a self-help based environment or trust-based environment.\(^10\) Broadly speaking, constructivism deals with the social construction of international politics because its structure itself is a huge factor in the development of events and is not a given. Ideas play a large role together with power and interests, and shape the effect they have.\(^11\)

To generalise, it is useful to look at the work of the most prominent scholar on constructivism in Lithuania, Dovilė Jakniūnaitė. In trying to answer the question of how to analyse international relations using constructivism, in her article Jakniūnaitė presents three base assumptions: 1. The importance of ideas while interpreting the material world 2. The constructions of intersubjective meanings 3. Agent vs. structure duality.\(^12\) In other words, by using the constructivist lens, we are agreeing that international politics is not an objective, but a socially conditioned reality created via the identities and actions of actors and influenced by ideas, norms, social interaction and

\(^8\) Ibid.
\(^11\) Ibid.
\(^12\) Jakniūnaitė, D. ir Nekrašas, E. Kaip tirti tarptautinius santykius konstruktivyviistiškai: filosofinių prielaidų ir teorinių nuostatų analizė. Politologija 2010/3 (59).
structure. The following subsection will discuss the beforementioned terms in more detail, underlying the focus on the role of norms in international relations.

1.1.1 Norms and ideas in international relations

As discussed in the previous subsection, the role of norms in international relations is considered huge by constructivists. In order to talk about what the United States does in the international sphere about LGBT human rights, the terms ‘international norms’, ‘norm diffusion’, and ‘norm socialization’ need to be introduced and their relevance discussed. These terms are important because constructivism sees state identities as factors in state decisions and political change as change of norms or ideals. State identities are tied to state norms which in turn are tied to international norms. A prominent constructivist Martha Finnemore focuses on these international norms and how they affect state interests. Finnemore positions that state behaviour is determined through identity and interest which in turn are defined by international norms of behaviour. International norms are defined as “ideas of varying degrees of abstraction and specification with respect to fundamental values”. What constitutes an international norm and what they they consist of is a very complex issue:

*Norms that have changed the behaviour of states and international organizations are diverse. They encompass regulations associated with domestic politics, such as suffrage, democracy, human rights, labour standards and prohibitions against slavery and apartheid. [...] While not an exhaustive list, their extent and variety suggest that international norms play a crucial and growing role in domestic and world politics. Yet, not all norms have their intended effects.*

In other words, it is unclear what makes a norm political. It is also unclear at this point what creates a norm either. And this is where discourse comes into play. As presented by Chantal Mouffe in *The Return of the Political*, “political discourse attempts to create specific forms of unity among different interests by relating them to a common project and by establishing a frontier to define the forces to be opposed, the enemy.” In the case of the present paper, the common project posed by Mouffe is the creation of a norm. The most elaborate but simple explanation of norms is

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13 Ibid.
proposed by Brett Remku Britt “norms, such as a norm regarding LGBT rights, do not contain any “fixed” content. Analysis of norms must focus on how they come to articulate historically contingent political alliances”. In other words, Britt opposes the idea that norms simply exist and claims the following:

There has been a tendency for those who write about norms to treat them as free-floating rules which regulate the behavior of states in the international system. While these rules are often framed as interacting alongside and interfacing with other norms, little attention is given to how these norms become articulated as part of a broader political project, which aims to influence a wide array of actors.

Therefore, rather than being static rights and wrongs, norm are living and changing phenomena that can be changed and influenced by others; as well as created. This paper takes Britt’s claims and aims to see if they can be detected in the behaviour of United States, it being a big proponent of LGBT rights worldwide today and to see how the stage is being set up for the negotiation of the LGBT norm.

In a more in depth work on norms, Katherine Sikkink (whose work is introduced in the following subsection), together with Finnemore in their article International norm dynamics and political change discuss this more in depth by writing that states are socialized to want certain things by international society by internationally held norms. Another term in the scholars use is ‘norm diffusion’ that is defined as a set of ‘causal mechanisms and processes by which ideas spread’. It as a top down effect where norm ‘entrepreneurs’ put the norms in place and then those norms are either followed or not but the receiving state. These concepts are presented more in depth in the following subsection.

1.1.2 LGBT human rights and norm diffusion

Katherine Sikkink, who is an international relations scholar and a human rights academic has worked on human rights in the international system for many years and in her book The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change she uses realism and constructivism as complementary, to talk about how the identity of a state is compatible with the realism notion of relative gains, because realism alone is unable to explain why states change their stance in

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17 Britt, Brett Remkus. LGBT Right in Contemporary Global Politics: Norms, Identity, and the Politics of Rights. University of Delaware, Department of Political Science and International Relations. 2015.
18 ibid
20 ibid
supporting one norm or another, but otherwise remains solely constructivist. Furthermore, because human rights are the focus of this paper, it is necessary to present a human rights norm diffusion model presented by Risse and Sikkink in 1999. It is a norm diffusion model that theorizes how the international community can promote human rights norms to its members. This paper will use Risse and Sikkink’s work to discuss the U.S. actions towards other countries to see how it tries to socialize LGBT norms into those states. Norm socialization in the book is defined as process in which ideas actually become norms which lead to change in identity which lead to change in behaviour of a state. The book provides three different socialization types:

1. Process of adaptation and strategic bargaining;

2. Processes of moral consciousness-raising, ‘shaming,’ argumentation, dialogue, and persuasion;

3. Processes of institutionalization and habitualization\(^{21}\)

In other words, norm socialization is what actions the international community can take or takes to make units abide of follow. The three different types serve for different existing issues and different norms. According to Sikkink (and other constructivists within IR), constructivism can be used as a way of thinking about pressure and while discussing relative and absolute gains in international politics in terms of human rights. If the interests that the actors have are determined by their identities, then norms by which those identities operate in turn become relative to their perception of gains. For example, research done by David L. Rousseau indicates that ‘salience of relative gains varies with the beliefs of the individual, the nature of the opponents, and the context of the situation’\(^{22}\). This basically means that what the state perceives to be the rational choice is still constructed. In many cases, human rights norms help put states into categories of ‘us’ and ‘them’, when it is liberal democratic states with good human rights record versus human rights norm violating states.

Finally, the most important part about theories that is relevant for this paper: the way Risse and Sikkink used a combination of realism and constructivism to talk about foreign policy objectives. Having in mind the fact that realism does not support the idea that norms or identities matter, Risse and Sikkink discuss how states would be willing to use existing norms to their favour.


\(^{22}\) David L. Rousseau. Relative or Absolute Gains: Beliefs and Behavior in International Politics. University of Pennsylvania. 1 July 1999
States can work towards staying within a norm in order to belong to the norm abiding state group. Furthermore, human rights being an international regime and a state’s decision to abide by it or not might directly affect national interest and have economic effects. Constructivism in this sense is very useful to talk about LGBT human rights in international relations, because gender studies also rely on the assumption that everything is constructed, including the gender and sexuality dichotomy in the world.

1.1.3 Norm diffusion and rhetoric

The underlying importance of identity for constructivism provides that what we say is as important as what we do, because we use words to construct our identities and the identities of those around us, as well as using common shared meaning to talk about issues or frame them in a certain way. In this context, rhetoric is one of the most important tools to influence perceptions and try to influence actions. This subsection shortly outlines the relationship between rhetoric and international relation in the context of LGBT human rights issues.

Constructivist strongly underline that framing issues and arguments to pursue one's interest is something that political actors do and also in turn create meaning that later become the foundations of norms and may later support a policy decision or form opinions. A fairly new theory about rhetoric by Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and Ronald R. Krebs (2007) should be introduced in order to proceed, because it is highly relevant while talking about constructing ideas and determining why some ideas becomes norms and others do not. Published ten years ago, their *Rhetorical Coercion* theory focuses on interaction and socialization, connecting the previously mentioned work of Katherine Sikkinks on norm socialization model and rhetoric. The rhetorical coercion theory is a three-actor model that consists of a claimant (C), Opposition (O), and the public (P). An argument that the claimant “puts forward contains two analytically separable parts: a frame (or set of terms) that characterizes the issue at hand and a set of implications that C suggests follows from that frame”\(^\text{24}\). The theory suggests that rather than operating on validity, the most important thing to take away from the rhetoric coercion theory is the claim that arguments are constructed on top of prior successful rhetorical framings:

\[
\text{In sum, one argument “wins” not because its grounds are “valid” in the sense of satisfying the demands of reason or because it accords with the audience’s prior normative commitments or material interests, but because its grounds are socially sustainable—}
\]


because the audience deems certain rhetorical deployments acceptable and others impermissible.\textsuperscript{25}

In other words, previously used successful rhetoric will have affect to newly introduced rhetoric determining the response of the public, therefore “winning or losing an argument is not about universal truths, but rather about “framing” the issue in a way which is acceptable to the public”\textsuperscript{26}. This is very important for this paper since it was United States that put LGBT rights under the umbrella of human rights, and it was not accidental or ideological. Using the rhetoric coercion model, the case of United States and promotion of LGBT human rights can be put into the following table:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Claimant</th>
<th>The United States</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>LGBT human rights abusing countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>The global community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. The U.S. framing of LGBT issues using coercion theory three-actor model

Source: Author.

The “Public” in this case is really the global public of the world, since the message of the United States is directed and each and every individual. How the United States construct their argument to win the opinion of the public will be analysed through speeches of president Obama and various members of his administration to see how the LGBT problem is framed and how the United States frames its own identity in light of this problem.

The overall direction of this paper is to critically look at documents and rhetoric using all these tools already developed by scholars. To see what might be the connection between all these theoretical approaches of coercive theory, norm socialization, issue framing, and norm diffusion outlined in the previous sections and the United States shaping of the LGBT rights topic internationally. The outline of LGBT rights emergence is presented in the following section.

5.2 Emergence of LGBT human rights in international relations

The acronym LGBT refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons. There are additional acronyms used, as for example LGBTQ or LGBTI, referring to intersex and queer


\textsuperscript{26}ibid
people, but for the sake of simplicity, this paper stays with LGBT. An international norm about LGBT rights does not exist as of yet, but the International Conference on LGBT Human Rights 2006\(^{27}\) with the signing of the Declaration of Montreal and the 2006 Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity apply international human rights law to violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity. In the 29 principles include: the right to equality and non-discrimination, the right to privacy, the right to found a family, and the right to freedom of assembly. Unfortunately the Yogyakarta principles are not binding in any way it is still a step forward to making states to comply with an international norm on LGBT rights. The very moment that these principles were written and now exist in international relations show the emergence of an international norm on LGBT rights. \(^{28}\) This emergence and spread of LGBT issues in the international context and more importantly within the human rights framing has been increasingly discussed. Kelly Kollman and Matthew Waites offer a collection of attempts to develop LGBT issues globally and claim that especially in international contexts this was most often done using human rights as a kind of a vehicle and a framing technique for political LGBT claims.\(^{29}\)

To further conceptualize LGBT human rights, it is important to note that “the very emergence of the concept ‘LGBT human rights’ is suggestive of the absence of LGBT people from previous conceptions of the human’.\(^{30}\) Before the human rights framing came along LGBT organisations mostly used equality and liberation as the main reasoning terminology while demanding for rights, and only in the 1990s did the topic of human rights became connected with the discourse of LGBT.\(^{31}\) Not only did this framing prove to be the most successful in “opening the doors of powerful international institutions” but also showed that “international developments have reverberated in domestic political settings, as is illustrated by the adoption of same-sex union policies by a majority of Western democracies over the past two decades”.\(^{32}\) Because LGBT rights are discussed in this paper in the framework of human rights, thus human rights in foreign policy need to be introduced shortly, which is done in the following subsection.

\(^{29}\) Kollman, Kelly and Waites, Matthew(2009)'The global politics of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender human rights: an introduction'. Contemporary Politics,15:1,1 — 17. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13569770802674188
\(^{30}\) ibid.
\(^{31}\) Ibid.
\(^{32}\) Ibid.
5.3 Human rights as a tool of foreign policy and the United States

Human rights were not always an obvious part of international relations dimension. Human rights invaded diplomacy in the 1970s. Mainly, because the idea of sovereignty itself opposes the idea of universal human rights. With the rise of liberalism after the Cold War, the focus on human rights strengthened over time at state level, and also at the international level. The issue of sovereignty put human rights in a very unfriendly environment, where human rights are just something talked about but not executable, unless it is a part of the state’s goal in the international cooperation. International relations theories of treaty obedience are not very good at explaining it in the human rights area.\(^3\) Many of the incentives that make treaty commitments and compliance appealing to states in the security, monetary and trade fields do not exist for human rights policy. If complying with human rights norms do not produce material gains, states will not be as concerned about it as much as they should be and ‘human rights change almost always begins with some instrumentally or strategically motivated adaptation by national governments to growing domestic and transnational pressures’.\(^4\)

With the Second World War and with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, human rights has become a regime that is respected in the international system. Sexuality itself was not mentioned in an international conference up until the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and still, the mention was heavily debate by the Catholic Church.\(^5\)

On the other hand, human rights in international relations can be regarded as a slippery slope if we talk about argumentative political discourse. The keyword here is ‘rights’ as it signifies something non-negotiable and in the world of politics non-negotiable usually signifies trouble: “like any other rights, human rights conceal a regulatory power, they are a global strategy of governmentality and domination, one that is all the more powerful, because it presents as an overtly anti-political project”.\(^6\) This is especially true for the case of the United States, since human rights and human rights violations were something of interest for the U.S. as early as 1940s, just not as a foreign policy matter,\(^7\) but “contemporary Congressional interest in human rights was activated by the civil rights movement in the 1960s, the backlash against the Vietnam War and a reaction to the

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\(^3\) Ibid
\(^5\) Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, A/CONF. 177/20, 15 September.
Nixon Administration’s unscrupulous foreign policy behaviour.” The United States human rights policy can be identified as “the intersection of foreign policy, foreign aid and human rights”. Decision makers in the United States use foreign aid to solve a range of problems and to protect its interests abroad and the Carter administration in the United States made human rights an element of foreign policy:

Human rights became very popular [...] in the 1970s.[...] Congress wrote into law formal requirements for the restriction or denial of foreign aid to countries that consistently violate the human rights of their citizens.[...] The intention of the legislation was to distance the United States from the morally reprehensible behavior of foreign aid recipients. No longer would U.S. foreign aid automatically be given to a country simply because it professed anti-communist or pro-American sentiments. Foreign aid would be directed to democratic regimes that respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

As the constructivist approach allows using state identity and ideology as a reasoning device, the United States’ first and foremost keyword for identity would obviously “freedom” and “equality”. Furthermore, the 1970s marked an increase in NGOs working to improve human rights and the professionalization of their efforts: Helsinki Watch, the predecessor of Human Rights Watch; the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA); and the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights (now known as Human Rights First). Then in 1977 Jimmy Carter made human rights a priority in his foreign policy.

Human rights however are not linked to the bigger and more multifaceted description of human rights found in the International Bill of Rights. Therefore, the United States’ Human rights foreign policy was meant to pressure others to improve personal freedom for people but was not applying the same standards to itself. This is especially evident in what happened after Carter, once Reagan came to office and is defined by scholars as American exceptionalism:

The Reagan administration's policies on human rights were initially almost a caricature of American exceptionalism cum cold war politics. Truth on human rights had been discovered in the enlightenment and implemented primarily through the American revolution. [...] The

39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
UN and most other international organizations not under significant U.S. influence were seen at best as unimportant …

In other words, Reagan did not try to use the international version of human rights but rather the American national version of it. The same happened with G.W. Bush., when the national definition of human rights was used to ignore international commitments. The Bush Administration did not respect the non-binding United Nations General Assembly Declaration that aimed for the decriminalization of homosexuality, and in this way became the only Western democracy not to back it. Both, Reagan and Bush used the version of human rights puts pressure on other actors rather than itself: “American exceptionalism and U.S. foreign policy have been intimately connected in the literature on U.S. foreign policy to such a degree that this connection is often simply assumed or taken for granted”.

Their views on human rights did not hold up enough significance to state identity to consider it valuable to abide by the human rights international norms. It ought to be noted that according to Simmons, the United States will have increased interest in improving human rights in a state when there is a bigger direct effect to the U.S. itself. In other words, Simmons’ statement shows that human rights norms will not be respected if there is nothing to gain from it for the states directly.

Furthermore, Wendy Brown suggests that human rights framing “presents itself as a kind of antipolitics- a pure defense of the innocent and the powerless against power” and that “human rights take their shape as a moral discourse centered on pain and suffering rather than political discourse and comprehensive justice”. In other words, this antipolitics creates a dangerous precedent of unarguable excuse to take one action or the other, because when a human rights card is flashed- no other explanation is needed, for example, if one state invades another. Thus, claiming that something is a human right puts the claim on an argumentative pedestal, where there can be no discussion about the issue and any attempt will be written off as evil.

5.4 Methods of analysis used in the paper

The previous subsections detailed the reason for the chosen theories and presented the complexity of the issue of human rights. This subsection outlines the methods of analysis used and the reasons for chosen analysis. It also includes the period of analysis and the sources.

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43 http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/19/world/19nations.html
45 Beth A. Simmons. From ratification to compliance : quantitative evidence on the spiral model
1.4.1 Methods of analysis

Ingrida Unikaitė-Jakuntavičienė and Sima Rakutienė outline the available document analysis and describe content analysis as means to evaluate the contents based on the context of research relevant to the scholar:

*Using content analysis method, selection is made according to the following elements: words, phrases, concepts, and other meaningful units (sentences, texts, sections, topics, etc.). This method is applied when researching media information, political speeches and reports, party programmes, parliament sitting stenographs, and other documents.*

In other words, all the sources analysed, should be analysed according to a pre-determined set of criteria. The first period of analysis, as it will be detailed in the following subsection, is the shorter half of the two periods of analysis. This first period and the rhetoric in this period was uses to determine which criterions should be used for analysis, which are the following:

1. Looking to find whether LGBT rights are framed a human rights issue
2. To determine how exactly LGBT rights are framed as a human rights problem
3. To find whether some countries are named as violating LGBT rights more than other in the view of the U.S.
4. To see what action plan the U.S. proposes to the global community in the context of LGBT rights issues
5. To analyse where does the U.S. positions itself regarding this issue

Using these criteria helps to select the rights speeches and documents that are in fact relevant to the problem. As mentioned before, the number of speeches analysed in the first period was essential in determining the right criteria, because it was unclear in what type of speeches this problem might occur. Moreover, The appropriate methodological steps have to be followed in order to analyse political rhetoric successfully; firstly, a close reading has to be done, but not without researching the broader political context of the issue; secondly, the observations have to be coupled with appropriate theoretical and critical filters to explain the observations; thirdly, the rhetorical act needs to be analysed using the provided theoretical “orientations”, following the implications

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47 Unikaitė-Jakuntavičienė, I. and Sima Rakutienė. Writing a Bachelor’s Thesis in the field of Political Science. DIDACTICAL GUIDELINES. Kaunas, 2013
“towards critical judgement about and evaluation of the rhetorical act”. The period of analysis is described more in depth in the following subsection.

Due to the vast number of speeches, statement and remarks “Microsoft Office Excel” was used to help compiling the speeches in a more efficient way. The first period of analysis includes all speeches and remarks made by the First Lady, former Secretary of State Hilary Rodham Clinton and the presidential speeches. The second period narrows bow by a lot on presidential speeches and remarks due to more concretely defined assessment criteria; but includes other speeches and statements by Randy W. Berry U.S. Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBT Persons; former Secretary of State John Kerry; former Vice President; Assistant Secretary of State Michael Posnee; and National Security Advisor Susan E. Rice.

The speeches can be put into three broad categories. The first category of speeches and statements refers to those, that mention LGBT rights, but the mention is either listing problems or otherwise just mentioning the problem once, without further elaboration. The second category is for the speeches that mention LGBT or human rights more than once but refer to national problems and national context. The third and final category refers to the speeches and remarks that are needed for the paper, which are those that mention LGBT rights in the context of foreign policy and international politics. To systemize the information, the table was done listing the speeches chronologically and marking the speeches that were relevant for the paper by using a different highlighting colour. An example of how the speeches were listed can be seen Table 2, in the following page.

The big number of speeches would make the annex too long, therefore the Excel file will be attached to the back of the paper via CD or a flash drive. In the table, the relevant to the topic speech is highlighted and meaningful citations are put to be used in the paper. The same was done while looking for relevant documents and actions of the government regarding LGBT issues. The documents and action, while not coming in large numbers, due to the novel nature of this subject, were hard to find, therefore it was useful to make chronologically systemized tables to see emerging trends. The table is presented in the next page.

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Table 2. Systematisation of speeches using “Microsoft Office Excel”

| Remarks by President Obama and President Abbas of the Palestinian Authority in press availability |  |
| Remarks by the President after hurricane preparedness meeting at FEMA headquarters |  |
| Remarks by the First Lady during Bancroft Elementary School Visit, 5-25-09 |  |
| Remarks by the President at a DNC fundraiser, 5-27-09 |  |
| PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: President Obama Calls for Through and Timely Confirmation for Judge Sotomayor |  |
| Remarks by the President on Securing Our Nation’s Cyber Infrastructure |  |
| Presidential Proclamation - LGBT Pride Month | The Administration has partnered with the LGBT community to advance a wide range of initiatives. At the international level, we have joined efforts at the United Nations to decriminalize homosexuality around the world. NOW, THEREFORE, LEAVING OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2008 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month. I call upon the people of the United States to run back discrimination and prejudice everywhere it exists. |
| Remarks by the President in Nomination of John Mccough as Secretary of the Army |  |
| Opening Remarks by the Vice President at the Business Leaders Roundtable on the Recovery Act |  |
| Remarks by the President before meeting with Senate Democrats to discuss health care |  |
| Remarks by the President upon signing the Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission Act |  |
| Remarks by President Obama and King Abdullah before meeting |  |
| Remarks by the First Lady at the Washington Math and Science Tech Public Charter High School Graduation |  |
| Remarks by the President at Caltech University, 6-04-09 |  |
| Remarks by President Obama and President Mubarak of Egypt before Bilateral Meeting, 8-4-09 |  |

Source: Author

To analyse the speeches, it was sought what connections were made among the speeches that met the criteria of keywords and contained “LGBT”, “gay rights”, “human rights” and other similar phrases by politicians and documents. It was sought to see how the position of the United States is constructed and how the U.S. positions itself around this problem, how important and/or severe it positions the problem to be, and where does it put other states in relation to this issue. Using the theoretical tools outlined previously, the speeches are analysed trying to find degrees of norm diffusion attempts and norm socialization attempts. In other words, it was sought to analyse how the U.S. itself presented the LGBT issue, whether they presented it as an emerging problem, as a worsening one, and how it positioned other actor around the world. The division of periods of analysis was also important for this paper and it is discussed in the following subsection.

1.4.2 Period of analysis and sources for analysis

The chosen period to analyse LGBT issues in U.S. foreign policy includes both terms of President Obama's administration, starting from 2009 and ending 2016, because it was first
introduced into it during this time. In this way, the creation of LGBT topic within foreign policy and the shaping of it can be observed.

The paper can be grouped into three major sections. Several options were available, for example, to simply split the sections into Obama’s terms, or take June 26, 2015 as the dividing factor (when the United States Supreme Court ruled in Obergefell v. Hodges that same-sex marriage is legal). It is interesting, however, to see the international dynamic before and after the famous speech by Hilary Clinton about human rights on Human Rights day and Obama’s memorandum directing all agencies engaged abroad to “ensure that U.S. diplomacy and foreign assistance promote and protect the human rights of LGBT persons”. The memorandum effectively made LGBT rights an official foreign policy issue.

Table 3. The period of analysis according to International Initiatives to Advance the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Dividing factor</th>
<th>Obama's term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011 December 6 – 2017 January 20</td>
<td>After the Presidential Memorandum “International Initiatives to Advance the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons”</td>
<td>I; II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author.

It is clear that the first part of analysis is considerably longer than the second period, but since LGBT issues were not in the forefront of the United States foreign policy issue list up until the December 6 public statement by president Obama and Secretary Clinton, the division seems appropriate. The first section starts with Obama’s inaugurations in 2009 and ends with the memorandum signing of 2011 December 6th. Consequentially, the second part of analysis follows right after December 6 and continues up until the end of Obama’s presidential term in 2017 January 20th. The second part will be subdivided into two subsections, taking into consideration the fact that July, 2015 marked LGBT marriage legalization in the United States, therefore this date will be taken to separate the subsections.

Having in mind the changes of LGBT issues within the country itself, it is difficult to separate the rhetoric aimed at nationals and containing reference to the international sphere, but the
8-year analysis period is extensive and thus should be sufficient to see how the LGBT issues are reflected in regard to the United States foreign policy.

Analysing the framing of LGBT human rights issue framing in U.S. foreign policy using constructivism requires looking at rhetoric as mentioned in the previous subsections. Therefore, the first part of the paper focuses on written primary sources. The analysed documents include fact sheets, declarations and reports as shown below in the table.

Table 4. Available documents, reports and declarations connected to LGBT rights published by the United States Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of release</th>
<th>Name of document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 06, 2011</td>
<td>Presidential Memorandum -- International Initiatives to Advance the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 8, 2013</td>
<td>FACT SHEET: The LGBTI Global Development Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 2013</td>
<td>Ministerial Declaration on Ending Violence and Discrimination Against Individuals Based on Their Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 2014</td>
<td>FACT SHEET : Global Equality Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June, 2014</td>
<td>LGBT VISION FOR ACTION: Promoting and Supporting the Inclusion of LGBT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>National Security Strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sources available are very limited, due to the topic being new. The documents and reports are listed chronologically above in table 2 and as it can be seen mostly consist of U.S. issued fact sheets that contain descriptions of programs that are being conducted. Introductions to country reports on human rights practices are also included, because they overview the trends on human rights violations in the world and discuss the most pressing issues according to the U.S. Country report introduction of the year 2016 is missing from the table because this particular report does not contain the overview section of the report and going through every country’s report is not the goal of this paper. Orders and legislative changes that occurred inside the United States within this period are taken into account in the paper but are not included in the analysis list, because the goal of the paper is to see how LGBT issues reflect in U.S. foreign policy.

The second part of this paper uses speeches, joint and not joint statements, and public remarks made by president Obama during the analysed period, as well as speeches and remarks made by relevant members of his administration, that officially represent the country’s stance on the matter. Obama’s rhetoric on the matter is very important, but remarks made by secretaries of state and other governmental officials is also vital to assess how joining forces, Obama’s administration shapes and frames the issues of LGBT rights in foreign policy. A total of 2630 speeches and remarks were analysed, going through the archived White House website, in which all presidential remarks and speeches can be found. Even though on the website, an overwhelming 4730 remarks and speeches can be found there, therefore, a closer look has been taken at less than half of the speeches and remarks, because a very large number of them discuss an internal policy matter that had nothing to do with either human rights of LGBT rights. Statements and speeches that were highly relevant to the paper and the topic were found in the 2009-2017 archive of the U.S. Department of State, using various search methods and analysing every result. Because the found statements and speeches were not under one category on the site, it is impossible to list all the analysed content (unlike with president Obama’s speeches and remarks, therefore, only the relevant results are included in the overall number. Moreover, as mentioned in the previous subsection, the speeches and statement from the first period were used to determine the analysis criteria, therefore

the number of speeches analysed in the first and second section is uneven. The first section that lasts from 2009 January 20 until 2011 December 6 contains 1804 speeches, while the longer period of 2011 December 6–2017 January 20 contain only 818 speeches and remarks. This is explained by the narrowing down of keywords and setting clear criteria after analysing the previous section.

6. LGBT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE FRAMING IN THE UNITED STATES DURING B. OBAMA’S ADMINISTRATION 2009.01.13-2011.12.06

The previous chapters and all the subsections served to outline the theoretical map that is going to be used in the analysis part of this paper. This chapter is based on the first selected period for analysing the discourse of president Obama during his first term serving as president of the United States up until 2011 December 6th when several speeches were publicly made officially making LGBT issues a U.S. foreign policy issue. The second section focuses on documents and speeches from the rest of Obama’s first term as president and the whole duration of the second term.

The results of the analysis in this period show positive results for LGBT issue framing. One of the questions raised in the theoretical section on how exactly LGBT rights are framed as a human rights problem is analysed in the following section, discussing how this period is in fact the period in which the human rights rhetoric on behalf of the U.S. emerges along with other chosen criteria. The results criteria for analysis are displayed in the table below:

**Table 5. LGBT human rights issue framing in the United States during Obama’s administration 2009.01.13-2011.12-06**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are LGBT rights are framed as human rights</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are some countries named as violating LGBT rights more than others in the view of the U.S.</td>
<td>Yes; Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What plan does the U.S. propose to the global community in the context of LGBT rights issues</td>
<td>Follow the U.S. example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where does the U.S. positions itself regarding this issue</td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
Rhetorical analysis provided all the answers to raised criteria showing how in this period the issue of LGBT rights is first presented in the realm of foreign policy and how it evolves up to December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011 and is discussed in this section.

From the start of Obama’s term, it was clear that LGBT related issues are going to be touched and he started from the national level. During the period of 2009-2011 a lot was done internally within the United States, probably to pave way to more international action without being hypocritical as the record has proved to be so far in terms of human rights. To shortly list Obama’s achievements it has to be said that during in 2009 Obama signed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which made hate crimes against LGBT officially illegal.<sup>50</sup> Later in December 2010, Obama signed the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell Repeal Act of 2010, which allowed to be openly gay in the United States Armed Forces.<sup>51</sup> Obama also backed other initiatives that were unsupported enough to pass, but this just shows the president’s interest in the issue nationally. A big change occurred in 2009, in the yearly report made by the State Department on human rights issues and crimes in the world, once Obama’s administration came and Clinton became secretary of state. The report includes an overall introduction on human rights violation trends in the world and country-specific sections on LGBT problems as part of Human Rights issues under the section Discrimination and Harassment of Vulnerable Groups even before these issues were publicly included under the human rights umbrella in the speeches of politicians:

*Members of vulnerable groups – racial, ethnic and religious minorities; the disabled; women and children; migrant workers; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals – often were marginalized and targets of societal and/or government-sanctioned abuse.*<sup>52</sup>

In other words, the members of LGBT community are considered part of vulnerable groups of people that are threatened and should be protected under the Universal Declaration of Human rights. The 2010 and 2011 years’ reports introductions contain descriptions of a “trend, and one that points in a negative direction” of crimes and discrimination against LGBT people among other groups such as racial, disabled, women, and children.<sup>53</sup> In the report of 2010, there is an exclusion

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<sup>51</sup> The President Signs Repeal of "Don't Ask Don't Tell": "Out of Many, We Are One". https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2010/12/22/president-signs-repeal-dont-ask-dont-tell-out-many-we-are-one


of African, Middle Eastern, and Caribbean nations – they are criticized for still having anti-gay legislature because it “reinforces and encourages societal discrimination and intolerance”.

In the selected period from the beginning of Obama’s term up until 2011 December, the number of speeches that discuss LGBT related topics are extremely low, if one does not want to focus on the internal level of the U.S. where Obama gave many speeches related to youth problems, marriage equality issues for the gay community and other topics, but speeches on international LGBT issues are scarce. On the other hand, this period carries many ‘firsts’ for gay rights framing and new strong ideas coming from the U.S.

The first feature noticed is the gradual emergence of gay rights and an international problem framing. These subtle first attempts to frame LGBT issues as an international ones seemingly arrived on June 1st, 2009, when President Obama issued the Proclamation No. 8387 for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month. The proclamation served to declare June as LGBT pride month and celebrate community initiatives. The proclamation ended with the following words:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2009 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month. I call upon the people of the United States to turn back discrimination and prejudice everywhere it exists.

Obama calls for Americans to say no to discrimination everywhere it exists, and not only in the United States of America. This speech serves as a starting point to the following intensification of LGBT related discourse. In this case it can be interpreted in either way, but the hint is already there. Later, in the year 2010 and the proclamation of that year the speech goes pretty much in the same way, but 2011 marks a huge leap in framing of LGBT issues - the proclamation of that year very explicitly outlines the scope of the LGBT human right fight:

we recognize that LGBT rights are human rights, my Administration stands with advocates of equality around the world in leading the fight against pernicious laws targeting LGBT persons and malicious attempts to exclude LGBT organizations from full participation in the international system.

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54 Ibid.  
This intensification in outlining LGBT rights objectives gets stronger with every year as it will be seen in further analysis. So far the reference is a generalized international system reference. Another thing that is important to note here, is that within one sentence, two negative adjectives are used in reference to those who object to the rights of LGBT- the effect achieved, together with the claim that LGBT right are default human rights, creates a stark contrast between those who oppose these rights and those who endorse them. A seemingly innocent and irrelevant detail that is very important once you remember that each speech is carefully written and reviewed by numerous people in charge. That means each work is deliberate and the effect of making this a fight of good versus evil is constructed purposefully. Another important moment in this speech is the construct of the U.S. as the “leader”. Not uncommon in general, therefore international LGBT rights efforts are also described as an U.S.-led effort:

We led a global campaign to ensure “sexual orientation” was included in the United Nations resolution on extrajudicial execution -- the only United Nations resolution that specifically mentions LGBT people -- to send the unequivocal message [...] and my Administration has mobilized unprecedented public commitments from countries around the world to join in the fight against hate and homophobia.

In other words, simple keywords indicate the U.S. to be a pioneer in this field and to be trying to make other states to help the U.S. in making a difference. The very first time, however, when human rights’ framing that was used explicitly by the administration of Obama was in 2010, when by the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton gave a speech at the before mentioned Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride month. During the speech, she directed the attention towards the dangers that LGBT people face and that “[t]hese dangers are not “gay” issues. This is a human rights issue.” Clinton was aware of a similar speech she had made in Beijing 15 years prior about women’s rights and consciously using the same famous slogan she had used, only changing the word “women” for the word “gay”: “well, let me say today that human rights are gay rights and gay rights are human rights, once and for all”. This speech not only marks that first official classification of gay rights as human rights by the U.S. government but also the first official mention of foreign LGBT efforts on behalf of the U.S. Clinton calls it “commitment to protect and advance the rights of all human beings, […]of members of the LGBT community around the world”.

58 Ibid.
In her speech, Clinton makes the United States a leader in combating gay rights abuses. The State Department especially is identified as the root of these efforts, saying that “the United States, and particularly the State Department, is taking the lead to confront the circumstances that LGBT people face in just going about their daily lives.” Making the U.S. a gay rights champion is a prevalent theme in most analysed speeches and this can be considered as the starting point of that.

Another theme prevalent in the same period as LGBT related speeches aimed at the international arena started popping up is the fact that the LGBT efforts are identified as ongoing efforts and not a start of chosen action. Just like Secretary Clinton said that “around the world, members of the U.S. Foreign Service continue to stand with LGBT communities in ways both large and small” choosing to say “continue” instead of any other tense indicate a conscious effort to portray the fight for LGBT rights as a long-ongoing activity on behalf of the state. Finally, Clinton’s speech is exceptional because LGBT issues are claimed to be a priority: “Our regional bureaus are working closely with our embassies on this issue […]asking every regional bureau to make this issue a priority”. This indicates urgency as if matters are getting worse somewhere is the world for the LGBT communities.

Just as framing an issue a certain way has a purpose, so does not framing an issue, or rather, not publicizing something also has a meaning. An important moment is the United States joining the United Nations LGBT Core Group in 2010. This Core Group is termed as a “largely unnoticed influence contributing to [LGBT] developments” and it as a “wide network of countries and civil society organizations that aims to ensure a place for “SOGI” (sexual orientation and gender identity) issues on the UN agenda”. Interestingly enough, the joining itself is not a widely publicized event and is not available in the any press articles available online except a small entry on the governmental website. This coalition was founded in 2007 by three Latin American states that wanted to fight against discrimination based on sexual orientation and later grew to include France, Japan, Israel, and others states. The results of analysing the rhetoric containing leadership framing on this issue suggest that perhaps the United States joining an pre-existing group is not a sign of leadership. A group of states that have been already combating LGBT related issues much longer instead of leading them, for the U.S. would clash with the preferred framing method of leading way to solve a problem and that might be a reason why this was not covered by the press so widely.

59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
63 Mexico joins coalition of nations pushing gay agenda. May 27, 2016
The only available entry that is published exists on the U.S. governmental website and stresses not the joining itself but rather the fact that “[t]hat year, on Human Rights Day, Ambassador Susan Rice spoke alongside the UN Secretary General at a panel discussion on the Human Rights of LGBT individuals – marking the first time the United States had co-sponsored such an event”. The linguistic construction of the sentence suggest the United States is at the centre of organising the even rather than participating in it, making it as close as possible to the previously noted theme of leadership rhetoric on this matter. Ambassador Susan Rice is an actively outspoken persona regarding this issue and her remarks are closely examined further into the paper.

Immediately after that, in July, 2010 The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (based in the U.S.) gets accredited UN special consultative status. The governmental websites presents the news stating that the U.S. “spearheads a successful effort” and that “[o]ut of more than 3,000 accredited NGOs, only nine focused primarily on LGBT rights”. A close reading of the article confirms the same leadership framing. Moreover, commenting on this achievement ambassador Susan Rice said, the vote was very important to “advance tenets of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. By doing so, Rice links the leadership rhetoric with the human rights framing and infers that the United States are leaders of advancing human rights. The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission changed its name after the accreditation into OutRight Action International in 2015 and is indeed the one of the only 9 UN accredited with consultative status.

Another important shift to note happened on March, 2011 when President Obama went to Brazil to discuss a number of topics with President Rousseff, among which one important to LGBT issue was discussed. In a statement by the Press Secretary on Ending Violence Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity he said that after this meeting a new position was created and it will be called a special rapporteur on LGBT human rights at the Organization of American States and that this “special rapporteur will be the first of its kind in the international system.” In his statement, the Press Secretary underlines the importance of the United States, saying that “[t]he President is proud of the work we have done to build international consensus on this critical issue”.

67 Statement by the Press Secretary on Ending Violence Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. March, 2011.
68 Ibid.
The rhetoric surrounding LGBT issue framing results show that some countries are more mentioned than others as violators of LGBT human rights. A prevalent theme that can be observed looking at the result of rhetoric related to LGBT rights is a starting clash of the United States and several African nations on the grounds of LGBT rights. Even though most African countries are receptive of the democratic efforts that the United States is bringing, scholars have recently written about the African rejection of the notion that democracy, human rights, could go under the same category with sexual rights. Even though that is not the case with all African states and “[d]uring the transition to democracy in the early 1990s, elites friendly to LGBT rights were able to get a prohibition against sexual orientation discrimination written into the new constitution” and “South Africa was the first country to adopt such a constitutional prohibition.” The framing of this issue in rhetoric presents African states as violators of LGBT human rights to the global community calling for action. In a speech made by Secretary Hilary Clinton, a focus on Africa is stressed saying that “[t]he Bureau of African Affairs has taken the lead by asking every embassy in Africa to report on the conditions of local LGBT communities”. This special attention to Africa might have been paid mostly due to Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Bill that was drafted in 2009 and the reactions of the Western world in its aftermath. During the National Prayer Breakfast, the president said the following: “We may disagree about gay marriage, but surely we can agree that it is unconscionable to target gays and lesbians for who they are -- whether it's here in the United States or [...] more extremely in odious laws that are being proposed most recently in Uganda.” The argument that the president makes is constructed upon a moral high-ground, as he refers to the actions of Uganda as immoral and to the laws as hateful. Secretary Hilary Rodham Clinton spoke out against actions of Uganda after the death of one of the LGBT activist working there saying the following:


dritic death underscores how critical it is that both the government and the people of Uganda, along with the international community, speak out against the discrimination, harassment, and intimidation of Uganda's LGBT community and work together to ensure that all individuals are accorded the same [...] it is also an occasion to reaffirm that human rights apply to everyone, no exceptions, and that the human rights of LGBT individuals cannot be separated from the human rights of all persons. Our

72 “Uganda: Reject Anti-Homosexuality Bill.”
73 Remarks by the President at the National Prayer Breakfast. February 04, 2010.
ambassadors and diplomats around the world will continue to advance a comprehensive human rights policy...\textsuperscript{74}

The framing of this event in the speech of Secretary Clintons corresponds to patterns of the Risse and Sikkink’s consciousness-raising, ‘shaming,’ argumentation, dialogue, and persuasion method presented previously in the theoretical part that is used by countries that aim to set a norm in another state. The death of the LGBT activist is used as an instrument of shaming to show that this is what happens when LGBT rights are not regarded as human rights. Clinton also specifically underlines the before mentioned phrase, repeating that these rights cannot be separated from other rights, and that when it is done otherwise, human rights are infringed. Again idea of continuous work is stressed, wanting to express how relentlessly the U.S. government works to advance gay rights at home and abroad. Moreover, the 2009 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices exclusively indicate Uganda as a hard violator of LGBT human rights and dedicating a whole paragraph to Uganda’s LGBT situation only saying: “the September introduction in parliament of a bill providing the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality" and for homosexual "serial offenders" resulted in increased harassment and intimidation of LGBT persons during the year”.\textsuperscript{75}

This special attention to Uganda, especially in the overviewing section of the human rights report creates an image of a worsening situation in terms of LGBT issues and presents an image of a growing threat to gay people. The passage continues as follows:

\textit{Public resentment of homosexual conduct sparked significant public debate during the year, and the government took a strong position against such conduct despite a December 2008 ruling by the High Court that constitutional rights apply to all persons, regardless of sexual orientation The local NGO Sexual Minorities Uganda protested alleged police harassment of several members for their vocal stand against sexual discrimination.}\textsuperscript{76}

This excerpt uses the words “sparked” saying that this was the start of the debate over gay rights and shares information of allegations rather than facts. This amount of details about one country in the broad introductory section of the report shows high interest in the state, whether it is the newly drafted legislature or other reasons. The same amount of detail is visible in the following year, 2010 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices where Uganda is described as a place where

\textsuperscript{74} Hillary Rodham Clinton statement on Murder of Ugandan LGBT Activist David Kato. January 27, 2011.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
“intimidation and harassment of LGBT individuals worsened during the year, and some government and religious leaders threatened LGBT individuals”.  

On the other hand, historically, scholars contribute a lot of the anti-gay propaganda that was spread in African countries by American evangelists: “In norm proxy war, actors patronize surrogates in locales where norms are weak in the hope that victories abroad will reverberate internationally and at home [and] this dynamic is illustrated by American evangelical sponsorship of political homophobia in Uganda, culminating in that country’s draconian anti-LGBT legislation”. By American evangelical sponsorship it is meant that Uganda is a very Christian country and as such had become very attractive for evangelical groups from the United States that bring anti-homosexuality ideas. This norm diffusion problem arises then the state that wants to socialize a norm somewhere else does not have a unified civil society stance on the matter. Furthermore, looking at this situation, coercion theory affirms this unsuccessful norm attachment, because the current human rights framing of gay rights clashes with the previous rhetoric of American evangelist, and for the communities of Uganda and other African states it might seem like a contradiction coming America. In other words the argument of “gay rights are human rights” loses because the previous religious argument of “gays are evil” was instilled by the same claimant. Discourse framing and issue-shaping of African state treatment of LGBT members of society becomes more pressing during the later years of Obama’s first term and during second term. The inter-state dialogue that ensues becomes a kind of tug of war and can be noted via public statements made by Obama himself, his administration and head of several African States.

This intensification of stressing LGBT issues as an international problem through building upon the principal of inherent human rights in this period indicates that the United States indeed was intending to take action based on these principals and wanted other states to be in agreement. Different governmental officials related to democratic and global affairs publicly spoke out for gay rights in 2011 coming up to the culmination of December 6 presidential memorandum directing every federal agency to work abroad to promote and protect the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender right and help LGBT people. In May, 2011 Maria Otero, who is the Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs claimed that “the United States government believes that “gay rights are human rights.” In countries from Uganda to Honduras, men and women are subjected to horrific violence [and] the United States has responded by condemning

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such actions”. As it can be seen, Uganda is mentioned again along with Honduras as examples of horrific violence against the LGBT community. In August, during a keynote Address by Daniel Baer to the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association said that “[w]e have won support for endorsements of the human rights of LGBT people in international fora, including, two months ago, the first ever UN resolution supporting these rights at the Human Rights Council in Geneva”,-basically accrediting the resolution to the sole effort of the United States. In September, President Obama in his address to the United Nations General Assembly said that “no country should deny people their rights because of who they love, which is why we must stand up for the rights of gays and lesbians everywhere.” Same month, Samantha Power, who is the Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights reinforced the president’s speech by saying:

*Under the leadership of President Obama and Secretary Clinton, our diplomats are engaging with their counterparts in embassies, meeting with LGBT advocates and civil society leaders, and ensuring that our foreign assistance is inclusive of and responsive to the needs of LGBT persons. We look forward to continued partnership in the weeks and months to come on these critical efforts.*

In other words, the United States made a clear set up of its own position on the LGBT rights problem: it aligned itself with the human rights framing and built upon its own previous stance of human rights being a priority for the state. Then the reports served to show how in other continents of regions, or states the situation is worsening and need immediate attention. The United States ten positioned itself as the volunteer to help solve these problems and advocated to the UN and to the global community that all countries should do the same and follow the United States, consequently constructing the image of itself as one of a leader and pioneer of the LGBT cause. The following section discusses the December 6, 2011 presidential memorandum and analyses rhetoric and documents in the rest of Obama’s term.

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82 Samantha Power, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, reflects on President Obama’s call for the rights of LGBT people in his address at the U.N. General Assembly. September 22, 2011.
7. LGBT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE FRAMING IN THE UNITED STATES
DURING B. OBAMA’S ADMINISTRATION 2011.12.06-2017.01.20

This section analyses documents released during the period of 2011.12.06-2017.01.20 that have relations to the issues of LGBT and help reveal the position of the United States clearly. This section also analyses speeches that took place in the same period. Separating documents from the speeches, this section is divided into two subsections, where the first subsection discuses documents and the second contains rhetoric analysis.

7.1 LGBT human rights issue framing in the United States’ documents during Obama’s administration 2011.12.06-2017.01.20

The historical December 06, 2011 Presidential Memorandum on International Initiatives to Advance the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons that was issued and signed by president Obama shifted the issues of LGBT onto another level of U.S. global politics, because it was the first governmental and global LGBT action plan released. President Obama expresses concern about the violence against LGBT people in the world and states that “Our deep commitment to advancing the human rights of all people is strengthened when we as the United States bring our tools to bear to vigorously advance this goal.”

The memorandum serves as an official order to the agencies that operate abroad and indicates different sections of actions that ought to be taken by them:

1. **Combating Criminalization of LGBT Status or Conduct Abroad.**
2. **Protecting Vulnerable LGBT Refugees and Asylum Seekers**
3. **Foreign Assistance to Protect Human Rights and Advance Nondiscrimination.**
4. **Swift and Meaningful U.S. Response to Human Rights Abuses of LGBT Persons Abroad**
5. **Engaging International Organizations in the Fight Against LGBT Discrimination**
6. **Reporting on Progress.**
7. **Definitions.**

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The memorandum simply opens the door for all foreign agencies, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to take action based on LGBT discrimination reasons. This is a very important tool enabling the U.S. to negotiate with LGBT rights violating states, to tell them off, and to threaten them as well. In other words, this memorandum serves as the next and higher step of norm socialization, where speaking out for a norms is backed up by allowing to take action based on that norm the state advocates for.

Along with the presidential memorandum, on the same day the U.S. government released a FACT SHEET: Advancing The Human Rights Of LGBT Persons Globally. The Department of State's Accomplishments Promoting the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People. The fact sheet contains detailed descriptions of U.S. LGBT global efforts and developments. The trend that is prominent in the report and contains leadership rhetoric is the most common result in all the analysed documents in this section. In the fact sheet, some countries are grouped as allies following the lead of the U.S. and others are shown to be disrespectful to the human rights of LGBT. The position of U.S. in regard to the before mentioned countries is also threatening and powerful: “The U.S. Ambassador called on the Honduran government to investigate a rise in violence and the unsolved murders of over 30 LGBT individuals.” In other words, the ambassador demanded the investigation and not inquired or asked for it, showing as mentioned a strong self-assessment on the issue. The last new development presented in the fact sheet is the launch of the “Secretary’s Global Equality Fund, a public-private partnership initiative to advance the human rights of LGBT people” via which funding is going to be allocated to promote LGBT human rights and complement other already existing programs (like Eastern and Southern Africa) to help monitor the situation. The rest of the provided information outlines goals and ongoing dialogues with other countries about the issue, lists international grouped initiatives and does it in a way that constructs it as already achieved goal.

Another trend prevalent in the documents is singling out countries that represent the threat to peaceful LGBT community existence in the world. The introductory overview of the 2012 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices singles out the already before mentioned Uganda:

Many countries around the world continue to criminalize consensual same-sex activity [...] In Uganda, draft anti-homosexuality legislation seeks to impose punishments ranging from imprisonment [...] to death for individuals twice convicted of “homosexuality.”  

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85 The Department of State's Accomplishments Promoting the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People; Fact Sheet: Advancing The Human Rights Of LGBT Persons Globally. December 6, 2011.
86 Ibid.
end of 2012 the bill was pending before parliament, with some local religious leaders urging parliament to pass the bill.

This passage also introduces another trend within the documents and rhetoric—presenting LGBT communities all around the world to be highly-threatened. This is the only passage available in the overview section of the report, but it contains a very powerful message and almost deceptive construction of the paragraph. The framing of the first sentence with the immediate follow up of the second sentence create the impression that punishment for homosexuality can end with a death penalty in many countries, not just Uganda. Whether chosen purposefully or by accident, the singling out of Uganda’s case that follows up right after a sentence saying that homosexual activity is criminalized in many places gives a bleak image of the global LGBT situation and creates urgency and a sense of danger. Moreover, it is unclear why Uganda is chosen explicitly to exemplify the dangers that the LGBT people face, because there are several countries besides it that have long-standing death penalty laws for the gay; such as Somalia, Iran, Saudi Arabia among others.  

The following year’s report mentions Uganda in the overview again, along with other states. The introduction of the 2013 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices mentions both Uganda and Nigeria because “a new law passed by the national assembly was pending signature at year’s end” along with Cameroon, Zambia and Russia for arresting, detaining, or persecuting LGBT persons in their respective countries. With a lot of attention dedicated to the LGBT issues compared to previous years’ overviews, a lot attention is paid to Russia. Russia’s human rights situation and democratic freedoms were going down on every level anyway and not only in the LGBT department, thus the report says so: “In Russia, the government selectively employed its new law on “foreign agents,” a law against “extremism,” and […] prosecute individuals and entities that had voiced criticism of the government, including […] vulnerable groups, such as the LGBT community”. Furthermore, Russia “banned the so-called “propaganda” of non-traditional sexual relations to minors.” In other words, a wider list of emerging of opposition states emerges from the reports and rhetoric, which now also includes Russia among the African States.

In 2013 The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) announced The LGBTI Global

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89 Ibid.
Development Partnership. The most important message within the fact sheet going in line with a before mentioned trend of presenting LGBT communities to be in a highly violent and death-threatening state:

*Over 70 countries and territories currently criminalize same-sex relations – several of which may legally impose the death penalty – and anti-LGBTI violence can be life-threatening. Access to essential services such as basic education, health, housing, and economic opportunities is often denied to LGBTI people. All too often this systemic discrimination locks LGBTI people into a cycle of extreme poverty.*

Again, the same construction of sentences is employed- death penalty is put adjacently to the number of seventy countries in which homosexual relations are illegal adding that violence can end in death, in case the structure of the sentence is too subtle to convey the immediate danger the LGBT community faces. This identification of a classic formula for framing a problem the way one wants to frame it does not speak for reality, but creates the intended effect- creates a war-like opposition where it’s a matter of life and death and each state has to choose a side.

September, 2013 the LGBT Core Group at the United Nations issued a joint Ministerial Declaration on Ending Violence and Discrimination Against Individuals Based on Their Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in which the member states affirm their commitment to LGBT rights and point to the main LGBT rights problem- that the human rights framing is not going to be affirmed until the governments of countries enforce it. Also, the reasoning behind this framing is also provided in the declaration- human rights are protected via legally binding treaties, therefore, LGBT rights, if accepted under this umbrella term, would also be protected legally. Here the claimant is the Core Group and the states that do not respect the human rights of LGBT people represent the opposition. The declaration commends positive developments of UN’s work, but urges to take action, suggesting immediate danger.

The next document chosen for analysis is the 2014 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices in which the general description of the LGBT rights in the world is presented in the same way as in previous years’ reports- that is, some countries are sectioned off and the attention drawn to the presents the overall situation as rapidly worsening, identifying crimes against LGBT as “widespread”. The report names Cameroon, Zambia, Nigeria, Uganda, and Russia as currently

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90 The LGBTI Global Development Partnership. 2013.
91 Ministerial Declaration on Ending Violence and Discrimination Against Individuals Based on Their Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. Declaration issued by members of the LGBT Core Group at the United Nations. September 26, 2013.
most notable examples of LGBT-directed violence with “restrictions on freedoms of association and assembly” as well as “subject to societal harassment, intimidation, threats to their well-being, and were denied access to health services” showing a grim view of LGBT community situations in those states. 93 Other states are unmentioned however, raising questions whether there are the only examples of such behaviour towards the LGBT persons or whether the report has other reasons to mention these states only, especially for the case of the African states, since the illegality of homosexual activity is not a new trends but a long instilled law in most. Russia’s mention can be explained by the new legislature of prohibiting ““propaganda” of nontraditional sexual relations to minors, which effectively criminalized public expression and assembly for anyone who would advocate for LGBT equality”.94 Subsequent country reports either do not have the introductory section or do not mention LGBT issues, which is why they are not mentioned the this analytical part.

Another newly presented document in January, 2014 was about Hilary Clinton’s Global Equality Fund managed by Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour. This is the first publicly available document about the activity of the fund since its conception in 2011 December, when LGBT rights officially became a foreign policy priority. Analysing the fact sheet provided by the governmental website it can be seen that it was updated several times since its release but no visible changes have been made to it.95 The fact sheet contains a listing of created mechanisms to deal with LGBT human rights infringing activity as well as partners of the fund:

Chile, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Uruguay, the Arcus Foundation, the John D. Evans Foundation, LLH: the Norwegian LGBT Organization, the M·A·C AIDS Fund, the Royal Bank of Canada, Deloitte LLP, Hilton Worldwide, the Human Rights Campaign, Out Leadership, and USAID.96

It is interesting to note that Uruguay is listed among the governmental partners, which is odd considering the bad evaluation of LGBT protection that the United States gives to Uruguay. Other partners include predictable liberal states, many American private enterprises, funds, and companies. These countries and enterprises make up the Partners Committee of the fund, because they contribute to the budget, and the fund decides what and who the moneys goes to. Global Equality Fund has so far released only one annual report, in which the report says to have funded global and regional problems for over than 20 million dollars. The bigger part of that money went to

93 Ibid.
96 Ibid.
programs in Africa. This fund is solely focused on LGBT related violations which makes it special and different from other funds that protect human rights and after that adopt LGBT rights under the same mission.

In June, 2014 “LGBT VISION FOR ACTION: Promoting and Supporting the Inclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Individuals” was released by the government. This is an action plan by USAID and an explanation of U.S. core principals regarding the issue of sexuality in the world, where “countless LGBT, other civil society and faith-based organizations from around the world were involved in reviewing a draft of this Vision, ensuring a truly global perspective”. The release of this document is important because it’s the longest and most comprehensive plan on clearly stating LGBT rights problems and steps to tackle the issue. Like in other previously released statements and other documents, human rights framing is exclusively used and is underlined in the preface of the document:

USAID’s Strategy on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (June 2013) states that integrating democracy, rights and governance (DRG) principles into USAID’s programming is fundamental to sustainable growth and progress. In so doing, the DRG Strategy elevates and underscores the Agency’s commitments to protecting and promoting the human rights of all persons.

In stating the problem this way, this document creates a connection between countless other commitments that the United States has made in the past regarding human rights, and the newly-risen problem of LGBT rights. This also strengthens the commitment that the U.S. is making towards this issue, because in this way it becomes integrated in many other sectors via human rights issues. A list of key words most frequently used in the document show a clear framing of imminent threat: “especially vicious violence”, “at risk of being raped or forcibly impregnated”, “targeted killings”, “subject to state repression, censorship and violence”. The document highlights the more pressing and negatives issues related to LGBT rights globally as mainstream and commonly experienced issues. As for example referring to Europe in this excerpt:

Violence against this group tends to be especially vicious compared to other bias-motivated crimes: incidents often show a high degree of cruelty and brutality and include beatings, torture, mutilation, castration and sexual assault. Consistent with this overall trend, surveys

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98 Ibid. Page ii.
99 Ibid.
in the Europe and Eurasia region detail the numerous types of offenses that are inflicted upon LGBT persons.\(^{100}\)

Attention here ought to be paid to how the follow up sentence about E&E region goes rights after explicit description of violence and torture against LGBT. The word ‘consistent’ implies that gays people in Europe are also treated in the same way, even though sexual activity among homosexuals is legal in all European states, gender and identity expression is legal in the majority of states and legal protection against discrimination also exists in most. These example are indicative of the United States framing as ‘exporting’ gay rights abroad. In other words it discredits other states and regions as having had progress on this issue, and highlight the problem only.

Another important issue stressed in documents was LGBT representation in government.

Just like mirror representation for females in government, the U.S. posits this problem as one of key problems facing LGBT communities globally. Again here the focus on Europe:

\[ \text{LGBT participation in democratic processes and government is limited. Of the countries in which USAID operates, only a handful have public officials in office that openly self-identify as LGBT. At the beginning of 2013, there were three Central/Eastern. European LGBT members of parliament, two African, two Latin American, one Middle Eastern, and one Asian.}^{101} \]

The issues of representation is an old one and is had been discussed for years and years already while talking about male vs. female representation. LGBT representation is an even more difficult problem to solve, since there are no indications about a person’s sexual identity or orientation externally unless he or she expresses them. There has not been any research done to prove or disprove this particular issue, but in terms of male-female representation in decision-making institutions, research does not show any clear evidence.\(^{102}\) At most, the results are mixed, and suggest that the problem lies elsewhere: in the society, and that it is the society that need transformation. That is, the there is no guarantee that and LGBT representative will make LGBT favourable decisions, taking into account power politics and other factors.

\(^{100}\) Ibid.
\(^{101}\) Ibid.
Taking the backlash and resistance of some parts of the world to accept LGBT rights as a norm into account, the Vision for Action presented core principles that the United States will respect while fighting for LGBT rights:

1) account for country and cultural context;
2) ensure openness and safety for dialogue;
3) integrate LGBTI issues into USAID’s work;
4) support and mobilize LGBTI communities;
5) build partnerships and create allies and champions.

Out of these principles, it is important to consider the first one- taking into account cultural context. This point constructs the view of the United States as understanding, but it does not belong together with human rights framing. Of course culture is an enormous factor in conditions for persons and the amount of freedoms they have in each country, but the way the U.S. frames the fight for LGBT human rights does not have space for cultural considerations. In fact, the document discusses the cultural point more in depth, recognizing that LGBT rights might be seen by some countries as “Western import”, in this way constructing the view that it is in fact not a Western import and is only seen that way by those confused countries. In other words, a failed norm internalization that happens in some countries due to many reasons, among which the Western framing of the LGBT rights itself is a big issue that is nowhere mentioned. Several programs launched (or relaunched in new LGBT framing) under USAID’s supervision: Being LGBT in Asia, The LGBTI Global Development Partnership, and HIV AIDS & PEPFAR, though the program for AIDS has been operating for 20 years in various ways. The first two programs are both operated by a long number of partners, but the biggest supporter of these is Sweden: “In 2014, the Embassy of Sweden in Bangkok, through the section for Regional Development Cooperation, joined the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as a lead funding partner”. Not only the government of Sweden, but also LGBT organisations take part in funding both programs, even though it is a much smaller part. This close cooperation shows that the United States is striving to be partners with such LGBT-friendly countries like Sweden that is renowned for non-discrimination policies for years, while the U.S. started campaigning and promoting gay rights just in the recent years.

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105 Being LGBT in Asia. Fact Sheet. 2014.
The same year, 2014 the U.S. government released a fact sheet on “Advancing the Human Rights of LGBT Persons Globally. The Department of State’s Accomplishments Promoting the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People” and the subsequent year followed with another fact sheet “Promoting and Protecting the Human Rights of LGBT Persons: A United States Government Priority”. Both releases are short and concise and discuss the main U.S. points of advancing LGBT rights abroad. Lie in all previously analysed documents, LGBT rights are framed as human rights, but it there is no explicit explanation anymore that the state government recognizes LGBT rights as human rights. Instead, the most important feature in both texts is the order in which the words are put: just looking at the titles of these fact sheets, it can be seen the following: “human rights of LGBT persons”, “LGBT human rights”. This way the construction of LGBT rights as a human rights problem seems like a social fact already, but unlike with other already agreed upon human rights issues, like for example women’s or children’s rights, LGBT rights still has the word ‘human’ attached to it, as if to explain or to reaffirm the audience that gay right are in fact human rights. It is more subtle because in previous documents and example of speeches the framing would be more in depth and would require longer explanations. Attaching the word ‘human’ while talking about gay rights also has a lot to do with the stigma surrounding homosexuality in different parts of the word, and in this sense proves to be a smart framing method to convince audiences that gays are also human, just like everyone else, as well as catch the attention of audiences that would dismiss gay rights as irrelevant.

Among the analysed documents, the 2015 National Security Strategy of 2015 is the only security strategy mentioned, due to LGBT rights not being mentioned in all the other ones. LGBT rights are listed under objectives of the national security of the United States twice referring to values of the U.S. under section four:

American values are reflective of the universal values we champion all around the world […] We will be a champion for communities that are too frequently vulnerable to violence, abuse, and neglect—such as ethnic and religious minorities; people with disabilities; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) individuals; displaced persons; and migrant workers.

108 Ibid.
Consistent with previous assertions about leadership, the two sections connected to LGBT rights in the national security strategy both put the U.S. in the position of the champion and leader—something seen a lot. Unlike in some previous documents, LGBT rights are not established as human rights exclusively, but instead are listed under all vulnerable groups of people in the world.

The last document to be discussed in relation to the topic of LGBT is the first report released by the Global Equality Fund (GEF). It is relevant since the fund was launched by the secretary of state at-the-time of its launch, Hilary Clinton. Global Equality Fund Annual Report 2015 shows that the fund received a lot of funding from Norway. This is another Scandinavian country famous for equality and civil rights of all citizens and aligning with such states gives the U.S. a good image. The report opens with the secretary of state 2015 John Kerry which contains a relevant excerpt:

> Because of courageous leaders and groups over a period of decades [...] the United States has taken major steps in recent years to recognize the rights of LGBT persons. Our country is better of those efforts- and it is common sense that we would seek to apply those same principles and lessons we advocate abroad. That is why supporting the human rights of LGBT persons internationally is a priority of our foreign policy.\(^{110}\)

Kerry’s introduction to the document talks about the majors steps of U.S. among which the most important one June 26, 2015 was the Supreme Court’s in favour of same-sex marriage decision. This is interesting not only because compared to European Countries, the U.S. is strongly lacking being in terms of same sex partnership laws, but also of the timeline of action that Kerry refers to in his introduction. The United States abstained back in 2008, when voting at the United Nations General Assembly on decriminalizing homosexuality and the construction of the U.S. as of a LGBT-supporting country came to be only around 2011 together with Obama’s administration. To further add to this, the support for gay rights nation-wide went almost hand-in-hand with U.S. paying attention and pointing to this issue internationally- the already previously mentioned Human Rights reports started mentioning and discussing LGBT rights back in 2009, and the U.S. joined the LGBT Core Group in 2010. Same year the already mentioned International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission gets accredited UN special consultative which also serves as an example of international efforts. Based on these examples, Kerry’s introduction to the report can be interpreted as constructing a different image- one of U.S. caring about LGBT rights inside and then later outside of the country, when in fact the efforts were parallel.

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The fund’s report contains many keywords consistent with previously analysed material regarding the position of the U.S. in relation to LGBT rights- that of a champion and pioneer. The descriptions in the report contain many synonymous words calling the fund a “unique” and “one of the largest sources of funding in the world” for LGBT rights promotion. The report primarily focuses on calling for action and urging other states to join the fund to advance civil societies and NGOs that advance LGBT rights. The reports shows a growth in partnerships between one in 2011 and twenty-one partnership in 2015 and the participating country number to grow from eight to eighty in these years. This should not be mistaken for the partner country number which is much smaller (eleven) but still shows how successful the activity of the fund is.

Overall, the call for action is a consistent feature in the above analysed documents. The reports and fact sheets are framing the LGBT rights issue as a very pressing one and calling to state governments globally to join the fight against violence and discrimination. The chosen chronological analysis of released documents highlights the intensifying nature of issue-framing, first highlighting the scale of gay rights violation globally, using the most extreme examples (of death and violence) to intensify the message; the issue-framing seems to be aiming at norm-diffusion worldwide starting from showing how the problem is spread, then moving on to underlying that gay rights are human rights with chosen word and sentence constructions in the documents; then to stressing that the United States takes a leading role on the matter, legitimising the state’s call for action. The following subsection analyses the speeches given in the same period and provides a table of overall results of this period’s document and speech contents regarding LGBT rights.

7.2 LGBT human rights issue framing using rhetoric in the United States during Obama’s administration 2011.12.06-2017.01.20

As mentioned in the methodological and introductory sections of this paper, the split of these two period for analysis is based on the date of the presidential memorandum that was released in December, 2011. The memorandum works as a marker for significant intensification of LGBT rights-related activity internationally for U.S. therefore this subsection starts from here and geos to see the tendencies in LGBT-related discourse and framing methods used from December, 2011 until the end of Obama’s administration. It ought to be mentioned that the scope of this paper focuses mostly of speeches delivered by the president himself, but regarding the issue being newly

112 Ibid.
introduced into foreign policy, other officials have also strongly contributed to the framing and promotion of LGBT rights, therefore the most important speeches are also looked at in order to get a clear view of the issue.

The memorandum gives instructions the Agency for International Development and the State Department to use foreign aid to protect the rights of LGBT. In it, President Obama lists a number of ways to promote gay rights worldwide. The first one is to “combat criminalization of LGBT status”; the second is to “protect LGBT refugees”; the third is to “provide Foreign Assistance to Protect Human Rights and Non-discrimination”; the fourth is “Swift U.S. responses to LGBT rights abuses”; and the fifth—“Engaging with International Organizations to end LGBT discrimination”.113 The Secretary carries out the President's foreign policies through the State Department and in fact the same day the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke at the Human Rights Council and reiterated U.S. support for promoting gay rights globally while she marked the International Human Rights day at the UN in Geneva. The announcements by Obama and Secretary of State LGBT right protection was included in USAID (United States Agency International Development). It launched a number of programs some of were discussed in the previous subsection: LGBT Global Development Partnership, South Africa Human Rights Fund, HIV/AIDS &PEPFAR, Being LGBT in Asia, and LGBT protection and empowerment in Colombia and others. Obama’s stance and memorandum are notable because this is the first big step to officially declare the U.S. position in the international arena, while Clinton’s speech is extremely powerful and internationally declares recognition of LGBT rights as human rights in the name of U.S. The previously discussed parallel gay rights pushing in both national and international level from this memorandum loses the equilibrium, because from this point the international stance becomes stronger, but this can be explained by the president having more power regarding international matters and being more restricted at home, where the congress can easily undermine his efforts. The memorandum and Clinton’s speech are being discussed here together because the joint delivery of these two is what highlights the strength with which the U.S. tackled this issue showing determination. It is worth looking more in detail at what exactly Clinton said in her speech to see what message was delivered to the UN. The first four paragraphs of the speech are dedicated to human rights declaration and how much has been done to improve the condition for all people. The transition towards gay rights starts with declaring the following:

Today, I want to talk about the work we have left to do to protect one group of people whose human rights are still denied in too many parts of the world today. In many ways, they are an invisible minority. They are arrested, beaten, terrorized, even executed.\textsuperscript{114}

This careful transition shows awareness of unfavourable governments, thus the human rights declaration is introduced in line with the upcoming human rights day and then an unidentified minority is introduced with a description of hardships that it experiences, again, like in previous analysed material, highlighting the extreme violence: “It is violation of human rights when people are beaten or killed because of their sexual orientation”.\textsuperscript{115} Only then the minority is introduced as being LGBT, making a smooth switch and firstly framing the problem on a broader level, to keep the attention of the broader audience. In line with previously noted trend, the human rights framing technique is consistent through saying the phrase altogether each time: “human rights of LGBT people” and not just saying ‘LGBT rights’.\textsuperscript{116} Furthermore, examples of ‘good’ states in regard to this question are given, stating that homosexuality is no the invention of the West: countries like India, South Africa, Colombia, Argentina, Nepal, and Mongolia are mentioned as countries in which “the rights of gays are also legally protected”.\textsuperscript{117} These examples outside of the boundaries of the Western world aim to further construct the argument that gay rights are not a selective problem but a fundamental one. Clinton addressed the representatives by saying that “[t]he actions you take, the ideals that you advocate, can determine whether human rights flourish where you are.”\textsuperscript{118} The tactics of persuasion is the main tool in order to socialize a norm, and this speech by Clinton is an exemplary norm socialization model. If rhetoric before December, 2011 was aimed at consciousness raising and taking small steps towards the goal of spreading LGBT rights as a human rights norm, this day and the memorandum with Clinton’s speech mark a full on call for action. The speech declared has two high point of which both are famous statements. Clinton rephrased herself from back in 1995 when she delivered the historical \textit{Women’s rights are Human Rights} speech in Beijing at the UN fourth world conference on women:\textsuperscript{119} “[L]ike being a woman, like being a racial, religious, tribal, or ethnic minority, being LGBT does not make you less human. And that is why gay rights are human rights, and human rights are gay rights”.\textsuperscript{120} This claim, especially delivered by

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid.
Clinton herself can be looked at in terms of coercive rhetoric theory, where in this case the claimant (Clinton) addresses the audience and builds her point on top of her own previous rhetoric that was accepted. Therefore, logic dictates that the second time round, the same formula could work as well. By attaching the ideas of a previously already socialized norm (that women’s rights are human rights) the argument is reinforced tenfold. Aiming at the essential human rights the LGBT argument is framed to resonate across all states, and the states themselves have to choose on which side they want to stand.

Furthermore, Clinton used another very strong phrase, that of “be on the rights side of history”. In other words, the clear division construct that is based on universal moral grounds does not leave a lot of space for discussion, but is a call for action, and in part creates a very clear black and white problem through this exact wording. At the same time this argumentation established the position of the U.S. itself as the one ‘acknowledging’ the problem rather than creating one. This speech marking the intense period of external LGBT rights related activity correlated with other documents analysed in the previous subsection from the same period.

From that point on, Obama’s administration starts a unified and consistent inclusion of LGBT rights in official statements and the underline of U.S. and Obama as leading the world in terms of gay rights dense throughout all rhetoric that is connected to LGBT. Daniel Baer, the deputy assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights, and labour, uses keywords like “first ever” and “ground-breaking” to refer to Obama’s memorandum, and calls Clinton’s delivered speech in the following way: “nothing has made me prouder than to see our country stand up and fight for American principles and ideals, wherever and whenever they are threatened”. In these examples, Baer’s speeches construct a clear image of the U.S. as the winner that cannot stand the injustice it sees around the world and steps in to make change happen. American values that are referred to in the briefing speech allude to democracy and basic rights, but what is interesting to note is that at that time the U.S. still did not have same-sex marriage legalised. Secretary of State John Kerry later refers to Clinton’s speech in the following way: “When Hillary Clinton gave that speech in front of the Human Rights Council in Geneva and said five simple words, “Gay rights are human rights,” she transformed the debate”. In this case Kerry even suggests that Clinton changed the way they were discussing the LGBT problem at the UN or globally,- but having in

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121 Ibid.
122 Daniel Baer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour, shares his thoughts on Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton’s historic speech in Geneva, Switzerland. December 8, 2011.
mind that is was the grassroots activist, NGO’s and other civil society organisations that came up with the human rights frame years ago, this renders that statement simply not true. Again, this goes in line with the noticed trend that the U.S. is constructing itself to be the leader on the issue vis-à-vis other nations around the world. This construct is visible in all initiatives in rhetoric throughout the analysed period.

Other members of administration hold the same trend in a clear decisive way. Hilary Clinton explains the American values to be those of “inclusivity” and explains that they government has chosen to put people as the focus of their foreign policy, paying attention to those “pushed to the margins” referring to the LGBT around the world and in this way making U.S., again, the leader and saviour. In another speech Hannah Rosenthal, Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism declared that “president Obama and Secretary Clinton made history when they explained on the international stage that protecting LGBT rights is part and parcel of our international human rights agenda” and again making the U.S. a champion vis-à-vis the rest of the world to which it has to “explain” the importance of gay rights. This type of superiority is prominent throughout all speeches and can be sensed in the whole period of analysis, whenever the audience is American. Secretary of State John Kerry also expressed strong opinions on the matter:

When we see the abuse of those values that are directed at the LGBT community, we have a moral obligation to stand in pride with LGBT individuals and advocates. We have a moral obligation to decry the marginalization and persecution of LGBT persons. And we have a moral obligation to promote societies that are more just, more fair, and tolerant. It is the right thing to do. It’s also in our country’s strategic interest.

Kerry keeps repeating the phrase ‘moral obligation’, underlining the moral legitimacy of actions of the U.S. and then goes on to name partner countries that also have the ‘moral high ground’. He names a list of Western European and Scandinavian countries (Norway, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Iceland, and Finland) to say that these countries and the United States stand together in this war on anti-LGBT violence. The inferred enemies of this were countries that do not protect LGBT rights. In another speech Kerry goes on to speak in a similar way underlining the urgency of this issue saying that “, recent events underscore that we can’t be content with the progress we’ve made” and that “all over the world, people continue to be killed, arrested, and


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harassed simply because of who they are, or who they love”. Kerry reinforces the Unites States’ leadership by saying that “The United States condemns this violence and harassment”, as if to say that as the guardian of LGBT rights around the world, the U.S. disapproves of all countries that disrespect LGBT rights. Again, like in previous speeches and documents, the strange construction of squeezing in the word ‘human’ when talking about gay rights: “LGBT persons must be free to exercise their human rights—including freedom of expression, freedom of religion and freedom of assembly and association—without fear of reprisal”. This works to strengthen the human rights frame, so that the audience does not forget that the point of the discourse is to talk about fundamental rights and not special rights. The president himself expresses the same position in his speeches. Obama addresses countries to join the fight of defending LGBT rights and uses the same construct of paying attention to the violence factor and creating a sense of urgency:

Our commitment to advancing equality for the LGBT community extends far beyond our borders. In many places around the globe, LGBT people face persecution, arrest, or even state-sponsored execution. This is unacceptable. The United States calls on every nation to join us in defending the universal human rights of our LGBT brothers and sisters.

This excerpt contains a lot of information that starts with expressed commitment on the U.S. part that goes further than U.S. borders- this implies immediately that within the U.S. itself LGBT rights are in good condition, even though it is not said so explicitly. Secondly state-sponsored execution is mentioned as part of the harsh violence frame that is used to urge countries to take action. Lastly, Obama calls for countries to join in the fight against this problem and defend their family- aiming for the emphatic argument. What this kind of rhetoric really creates is strong division among countries or even a backlash, as in the case of several African countries.

A tendency noticed in the rhetoric that was also mentioned in the previous section is that of sectioning out some countries as harsher violators of LGBT human rights, and other countries- as allies of the U.S. in this fight. This trend was noticed in human rights reports issued by the U.S. government and in some speeches. This period has more statements that verify this trend, like for example John Kerry’s statement at a LGBT pride event in 2014:

From Uganda to Russia to Iran, LGBT communities face discriminatory laws and practices that attack dignity, undermine safety, and violate human rights. And we each have a

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129 Ibid.
responsibility to push back against a global trend of rising violence and discrimination against LGBT persons.\textsuperscript{131}

Even though Kerry is implying that that many countries violate LGBT rights, the examples given are specific three countries which have been mentioned before in other speeches and documents. Russia’s anti-gay propaganda laws cascaded in copied laws across Eastern Europe as well, but Russia is the only on mentioned in the example. Same for Uganda- it is one among many other African states that have anti-LGBT legislation but only this state is mentioned and Uganda keeps coming up everywhere. This, however has to do with Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya having newly adopted anti-homosexuality laws. Another very important detail in this excerpt is hoe Kerry describes the situation as ‘rising’ in violence and discrimination. This construction is the situation worsening is not entirely backed up by facts but aids the urgency that is being created.

Coming back to rhetoric involving African states and LGBT issues came up frequently while analysing the speeches. The situation in Africa in short can be described as unfavourable to homosexuals in most states, with a very high population and governmental unity against it, mostly due to Christian missionaries spreading homophobia in the continent for years, many of which also from the West.\textsuperscript{132} In 2015, president Obama went around Africa discussing world and local issues with African leaders. While in Kenya, for example, Obama talked to President Kenyatta of Kenya in a press conference and expressed the following view:

Similarly, with respect to the rights of gays and lesbians, I’ve been consistent all across Africa on this. I believe in the principle of treating people equally under the law, and that they are deserving of equal protection under the law and that the state should not discriminate against people based on their sexual orientation. And I say that, recognizing that there may be people who have different religious or cultural beliefs…If you look at the history of countries around the world, when you start treating people differently -- not because of any harm they’re doing anybody, but because they’re different -- that’s the path whereby freedoms begin to erode and bad things happen. And when a government gets in the habit of treating people differently, those habits can spread.

This long excerpt is needed to look at how differently the language is constructed while addressing the leaders of Africa, compared to all previous analysis. Firstly, looking at the text it can be seen immediately that the ‘LGBT’ acronym is gone- this framing of LGBT community would


not resonate with African people simply because there is no community. Also, the human rights frame is gone as well, as the speech uses not the language of rights, but constructs the argument on the basis of equality. The human rights frame as a moral obligation to do right is not used here, perhaps assuming that the Western human rights norms would not resonate with the African people or simply thinking that the same urgent argument used in other contexts might be too radical for African states, in which the population is also strictly against homosexuality. The urgent ordering to pick a side in the fight for gay rights is absent, as it was also in speeches in other states. Perhaps the reason is this: “In one survey, 97% percent of Senegalese agreed that homosexuality should be rejected”. Such a high percentage does not leave anyone doubtful that the fight for LGBT rights would be lost, should someone started this war. It is interesting to see, however what a huge difference in rhetoric exists within the same timeframe, and just changing the country in which Obama speaks. Just before his trip to Africa, at the end of May, before the LGBT pride month, declared that “because we know LGBT rights are human rights, we are championing protections and support for LGBT persons around the world”.

This stark contrast shows how the goal to diffuse LGBT rights as a norm is being reached carefully using arguments and constructions that would resonate with the audience and compel the opposition to have a lesser argument. So, for example in the West, the easiest construction to diffuse a norm is exactly to frame it in human rights terms. This is because it depoliticizes the problem and works as protection of the weak and violated group. To do this, you first need to have a group, that is why LGBT acronym was coined- to unite and refer to a part of society connected just by one thing, and then advocate for their rights in the name of fundamental human rights. This house of cards falls completely once you reach Africa, because neither of those constructs work. This is explained well through to rhetorical coercion theory, and goes a little back to the before mentioned Christian missionaries that spread religion around the continent. Along with that, homophobia was spread, and it became a norm that was socialized and absorbed. Coming to this day and age, rhetorical coercion dictates that you build your arguments on your previously built successful arguments, therefore now when the U.S. is attempting to spread LGBT rights, it directly clashed with the previously diffused norm that gays are evil. African people and leader may this contradiction of argument coming from th West, and reject it with a passion. This is what also might explain the emerged anti-homosexual legislation in 2012 in Nigeria, Uganda, Gambia, Kenya and others. However, Obama did a lot of work all around Africa, and encouraged the leaders to change things, as well Randy W. Berry, U.S. Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI

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Persons. He described the situation in Africa by saying that “about half of the countries in the world that criminalize same-sex relationships are in Africa”.  

Many world political leaders use homophobia to score political points and to distract from significant issues [...] Many of those same leaders contribute to a broader trend of using regressive new laws to restrict space for civil society actors and dissenting views for the LGBTI community and beyond [...] In 2014, we announced measures, including redirected funding, that were in response to the enactment of the Anti-Homosexuality Act in Uganda, [...] In The Gambia, our decision to revoke the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) status was propelled by repugnant anti-LGBTI comments and policies implemented by President Jammeh.

In other words Berry is putting the weight on political leaders, blaming mostly them for spreading homophobia, implying that the communities by default are not prejudices, ignoring many cultural and historical factors in this way. As a solution to some problems, Berry lists that some fund were relocated and some agreements were revoked, suggesting that the U.S. is taking a carrots and sticks approach in LGBT rights violations in Africa, an alternative to human rights framing at UN when calling states to fight for morality. The U.S. also expanded their reach with LGBT centers and programs in African everywhere where the U.S. had anti-HIV help centers and networks of civil society. Also the “U.S. Government advocacy against Uganda’s proposed Anti-Homosexuality Bill established a precedent for the United States, the international donor community and civil society to collaborate to counter efforts to criminalize same-sex conduct.”

Obama’s statement for the case of Uganda that was delivered in the U.S. is also quite different from what he said in conferences to African leaders. He starts with the usual human rights framing by saying “As a country and a people, the United States has consistently stood for the protection of fundamental freedoms and universal human rights” and in this way establishing the leadership of U.S. Then Obama goes on to express criticism and “disappointment” and calls it “a step back for all Ugandans”- by saying that it is a step back for the people he infers that there is a struggle and fight for LGBT rights in Uganda. He closes his speech by saying the following:

At a time when, tragically, we are seeing an increase in reports of violence and harassment targeting members of the LGBT community from Russia to Nigeria, I salute all

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those in Uganda and around the world who remain committed to respecting the human rights and fundamental human dignity of all persons.

The closing statement also complies with the noticed trends, where it can be seen that an increase of violence in the world against LGBT people is stressed; some countries are excluded as examples with struggling LGBT communities (Russia is mentioned again, as well as Nigeria) and human rights frame is reinforces to close the argumentation. All the mentioned trends that came up in the analysis are consistent with the previous chapter, where the emergence of such constructions coming up to the presidential memorandum were more subtle and in this chapter and period were noticed to be more forceful and straightforward. A more concise representation of analysing rhetoric in this period can be seen in the table below.

Table 6. LGBT human rights issue framing in the United States during Obama’s administration 2011.12.06-2017.01.20

| Are LGBT rights are framed as human rights | In most cases –yes |
| Are some countries named as violating LGBT rights more than others in the view of the U.S. | Yes; several South African states among which Uganda is mentioned most frequently; Russia is mentioned several times. |
| What plan does the U.S. propose to the global community in the context of LGBT rights issues | Suggests following the U.S. example; picking a side for the fight; |
| Where does the U.S. positions itself regarding this issue | Leader/ together with the LGBT rights protecting countries |

Source: Author

A reasonably clear conclusion can be drawn from the analysis, revealing that the rhetoric regarding LGBT rights was always frames as a human rights issue, with the only exception being a few African leaders, where a less confrontational approach was chosen to discuss the issue. Norm diffusion and human rights framing together used in the rhetoric of Obama’s administration create a division among states, splitting them between morally right and wrong. Human rights framing used for LGBT rights depoliticizes a matter and leaves no space for dialogue, dividing the global community into two distinct categories. One of the following options, or several, can be held true for the United States: the civil society advocating for LGBT rights was getting stronger and stronger; the United States, as a proud-human rights abiding state that claims to lead by example chose to lead a foreign policy that treats LGBT rights as one of the fundamental human rights and
further support civil society in this way riding the wave. In other words, the ‘flow’ of spreading gay rights is constructed as coming from the U.S. and within the terms that it wants to use, as well as within the framing that it wants to use. These peculiarities of this framing aid faster diffusion of LGBT rights as human rights norm globally among the accepting states, but also create a harsher backlash from states who reject this notion, which happens precisely because of this chosen problem framing. More flexibility in human rights discussion creates not only more space for discussion and considering cultural factor, but also more space for crime on the basis of sexuality,- therefore, it is a choice that the United States took and a stance that will shape the next years of human rights panels and discussion around the world. Sexuality is something that lies at the very foundation of our society and that dictates how we live our lives- family values, children, and partnership. LGBT human rights threaten to take away that foundation from underneath us and in this way disrupt order. But it should not be forgotten that women’s rights one were thought not to be a part of global political discourse as well. In the fields of international relations, where everything can (or is) a tool to achieve goals in global politics, sexuality rights come as no different. It is unclear, however, why certain problems that have to do with human rights become international, and others do not. This is due to the fact that on the international level, norms do not exist in vacuum and are constantly change, meaning they are in flux.

Not unlike previous moves by the United States in history that claimed universality for values, that are American primarily, the “pursuit of ‘human rights’” (quotation marks in the original text) is a further instance of the US concept of the self, given that this particular concept of ‘human rights’ embodies the achievement of freedom through an ‘institutionalizing of a purified notion of individual selfhood”. Even though David Campbell was referring to Clinton’s administration and Reagan’s administration, this applies to Obama’s administration as well in regard to the issue of LGBT rights. Not only is the United States attempt to diffuse the norms of LGBT rights within the framing of human rights, but even the term LGBT itself was coined in the United States. The gay community is represented is just another compartmentalisation, even though the discourse entail unity and equality for all, the framing itself sets the LGBT group apart and puts it among disadvantage minorities and people with disabilities. The discourse framing of Obama administration regarding this issue related to Campbell quote, because it is more a reflections of how the United States is positioning itself vis-à-vis the global community rather about the issue itself.

8. CONCLUSION

1. The strategy of this paper was built using a methodological framework based on the international relations theory of constructivism; on the rhetorical coercion theory; and on norm diffusion literature using content and document analysis methods. 16 documents and fact sheets published by the United States government were analysed, along with 2630 speeches of B. Obama and other governmental officials. The data was analysed according to the following set of criteria: (1) whether LGBT rights are framed as a human rights issue; (2) how exactly LGBT rights are framed as a human rights problem, (3) whether some countries are named as violating LGBT rights more than other in the view of the U.S.; (4) what action plan the U.S. proposes to the global community in the context of LGBT rights issue; (5) how does the U.S. positions itself regarding this issue. The data was analysed looking to find predominant keywords in speeches related to LGBT rights.

2. The analysis of LGBT human rights issue framing in the United States during Obama’s administration 2009.01.13-2011.12-06 showed the emergence of framing LGBT rights as human rights in U.S. rhetoric, through the inclusion of LGBT rights violations into governmental human rights reports and mentioning this in speeches. The proposed action plan, however is unclear, apart from leading by example thus positioning itself as a leader. The analysis also provided results that the U.S. construct an urgency around the issue of LGBT rights, making claims of rising violence and using this as an argument to encourage countries to join its lead in fighting homophobia.

3. The analysis of LGBT human rights issue framing in the United States during Obama’s administration 2011.12.06-2017.01.20 provided result of human rights framing for the issue of LGBT rights. The framing became an official part of U.S. foreign policy, creating a divide with countries that do not agree that LGBT rights are fundamental human rights. This is used by the U.S. in rhetoric as making an example of countries that to not abide LGBT-friendly legislation, calling them violators of human rights and asking other states to join the fight.

4. The main hypothesis that LGBT rights are framed as human rights in the rhetoric of Obama’s administration is confirmed. The positioning the United States as the main advocate for LGBT rights internationally is also confirmed as a construct that is maintained by the U.S. itself, because it holds true only for the kind of LGBT movement that was coined in the United States; whereas in other parts of the world where the rights and freedoms of gay people might be not necessarily worse but simply diverse in articulation. The confrontational strategy that the U.S. chose to advocate LGBT rights as part of human rights can be explained by previous civil society attempts to advocate gay rights through different slogans, but the human rights frame was the most
successful one, which could be why the U.S. also chose this frame. Another explanation can rise from rhetorical coercion theory, looking back at all the human rights championing moments the United States has had, therefore, another human rights frame statistically should also have good chances of picking in globally. The third and final explanation could be that the time has come for gay rights to be recognized more, and that the U.S. saw it coming and chose to go with this trend being its advocate, rather than wait for change to come to it.
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