

# A Framing Battle: Human Rights and the Beijing Olympics

Advocacy Groups vs Olympic Officials

Ana ADI

- Context
- Framing
- Results
- Conclusion and Discussion





# Context

- China's pursuit of the Olympic dream
- Pro-Tibet and media freedom protests during Olympic Torch Relay 2008
- 2001 Protests against China's candidature

# Framing

“To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”

(Entman, 1993)

# Methodology

- Qualitative analysis
  - Discourse analysis
  - Framing analysis
  - Contextual analysis
  - Nvivo8 coding

# Sample

- Press releases, reports and opinion pieces
- Press conference transcripts
  - Medium: online
  - Search: China AND “human rights”
  - Period: July 2001 and August 2008



HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
WATCH



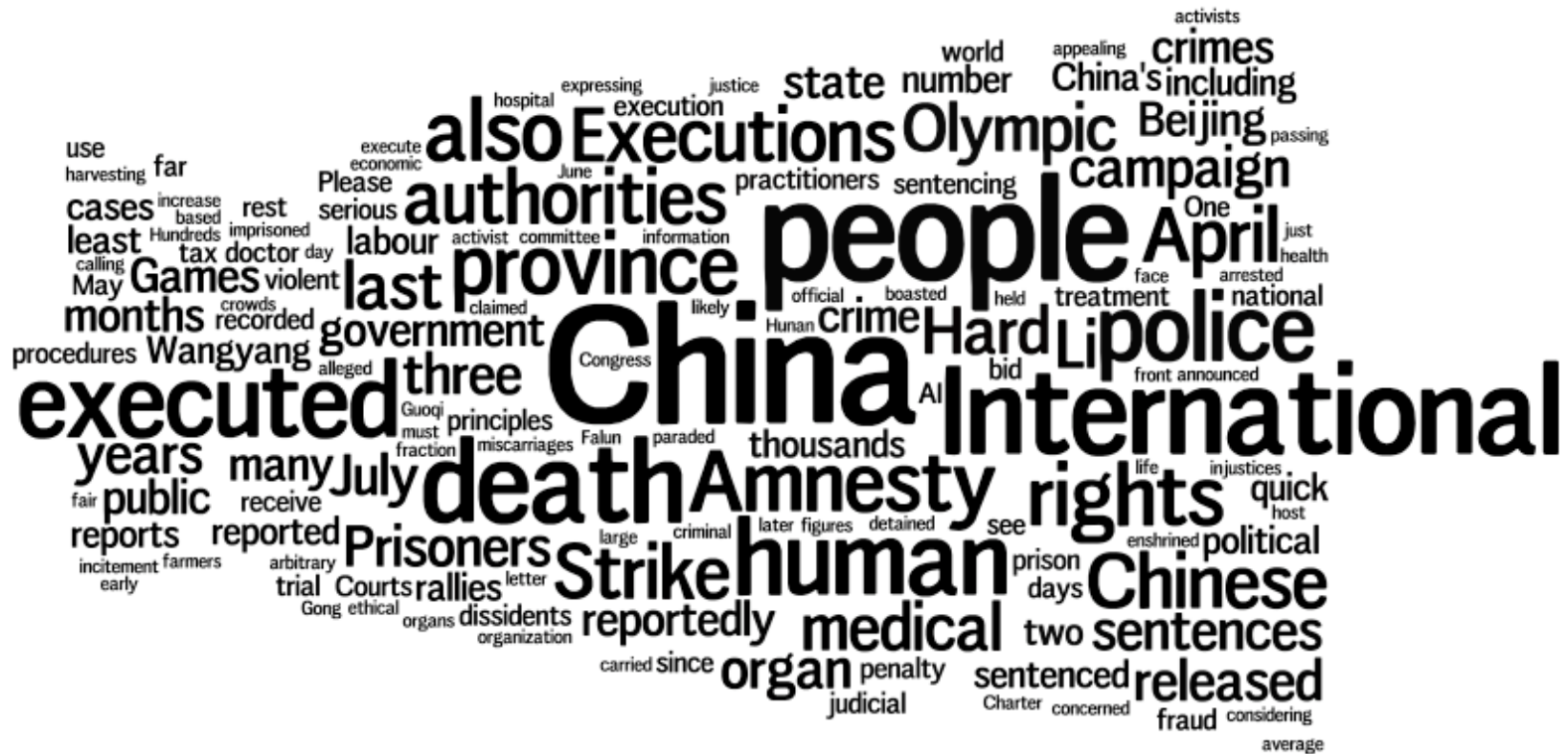
# Sample

	July 2001	August 2008
AI	6	4
HRW	6	10
BOCOG	-	31
IOC	3	20
BIMC	-	13



HUMAN  
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- Difficult to find
- Website of BOBICO was taken over in 2001 by BOCOG
- Documents available are the Beijing Bid file and secondary data



## Press releases

### IOC SELECTS BEIJING AS THE HOST CITY FOR THE GAMES OF THE XXIX OLYMPIAD IN 2008

#### Moscow , 13 July 2001

The IOC President announced today Beijing as the host city for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in 2008. Beijing obtained 56 ballots on the second round of voting. The vote was taken this afternoon by IOC members eligible to vote at the Session .

Under regulations in place, five candidate cities were selected by the IOC Executive Board, out of ten applicant cities, based on the recommendations of an experts' report. Ten cities were originally interested in hosting the Olympic Games in 2008: Bangkok, Beijing, Cairo, Havana, Istanbul, Kuala Lumpur, Osaka, Paris, Seville, and Toronto.

The IOC President thanked all five cities for their tremendous efforts and expressed his confidence that " Beijing Games would leave a unique legacy to China and to Sports".

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**moscow 2001**



**112th IOC SESSION**

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**ELECTION OF THE HOST CITY**

**ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT**



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BEIJING > ELECTION



## BEIJING 2008

Election

### ELECTION

The new two-phase host city election procedure, adopted by the 110th IOC Session in December 1999, was used for the election of the host city for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in 2008.

Following this new procedure, cities must pass an initial selection phase during which basic technical requirements are examined by a team of experts and then put forward to the IOC Executive Board. The 10 applicant cities for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in 2008 put forward to the IOC Executive Board were: Bangkok, Beijing, Cairo, Havana, Istanbul, Kuala Lumpur, Osaka, Paris, Seville, Toronto.

Once approved by the Executive Board, the cities become official Candidate Cities and are authorised to go forward into the full bid process. The five Candidate Cities for 2008 accepted by the IOC Executive Board on 28 August 2000 were (in the order of drawing of lots): Osaka, Paris, Toronto, Beijing, Istanbul.

The full bid process includes notably the submission of a Candidature File to the IOC, followed by the visit of the IOC Evaluation Commission to each of the Candidate Cities. The Evaluation Commission studies the candidatures of each Candidate City, inspects the sites and submits a written report on all candidatures to the IOC two months before the Session which will elect the host city.

On 13 July 2001 at the 112th IOC Session in Moscow, Beijing was elected the Host City for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in 2008.

#### 112th IOC Session in Moscow, 13 July 2001: election of the host city for the XXIX Olympiad in Beijing

Round	1	2
Beijing	44	56
Istanbul	17	9
Osaka	6	
Paris	15	18
Toronto	20	22

[All the documents related to the election procedure for 2008](#)

Search

### PAST ELECTIONS

All the past elections results since 1992

[Learn more](#)

### ORGANISING COMMITTEES OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The Organising Committees of the Olympic Games (OCOGs) organise the Olympic Games in collaboration with their National Olympic Committee and the host city.

[Learn more](#)

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[112th IOC Session Website](#)

[www.beijing2008.com](http://www.beijing2008.com)













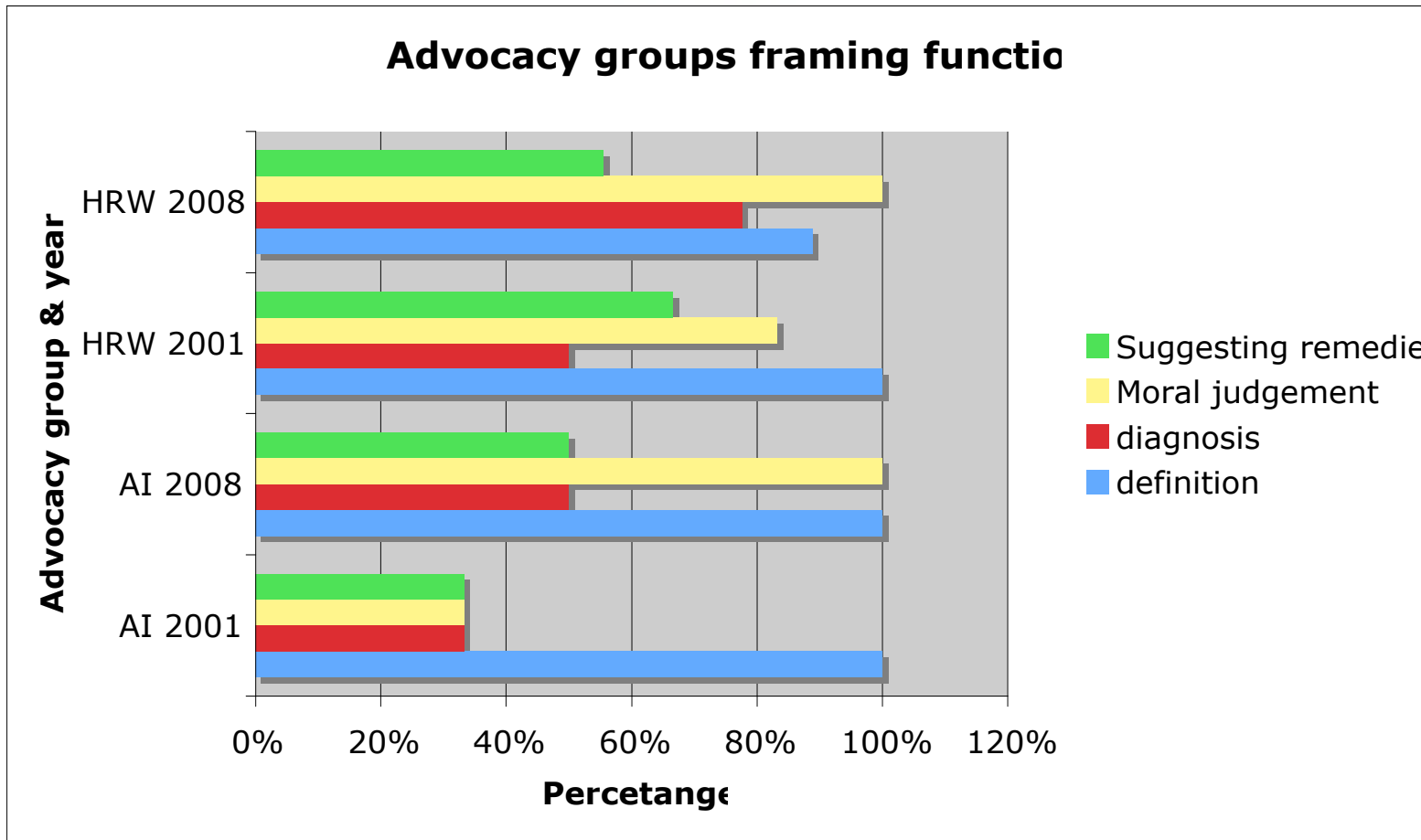


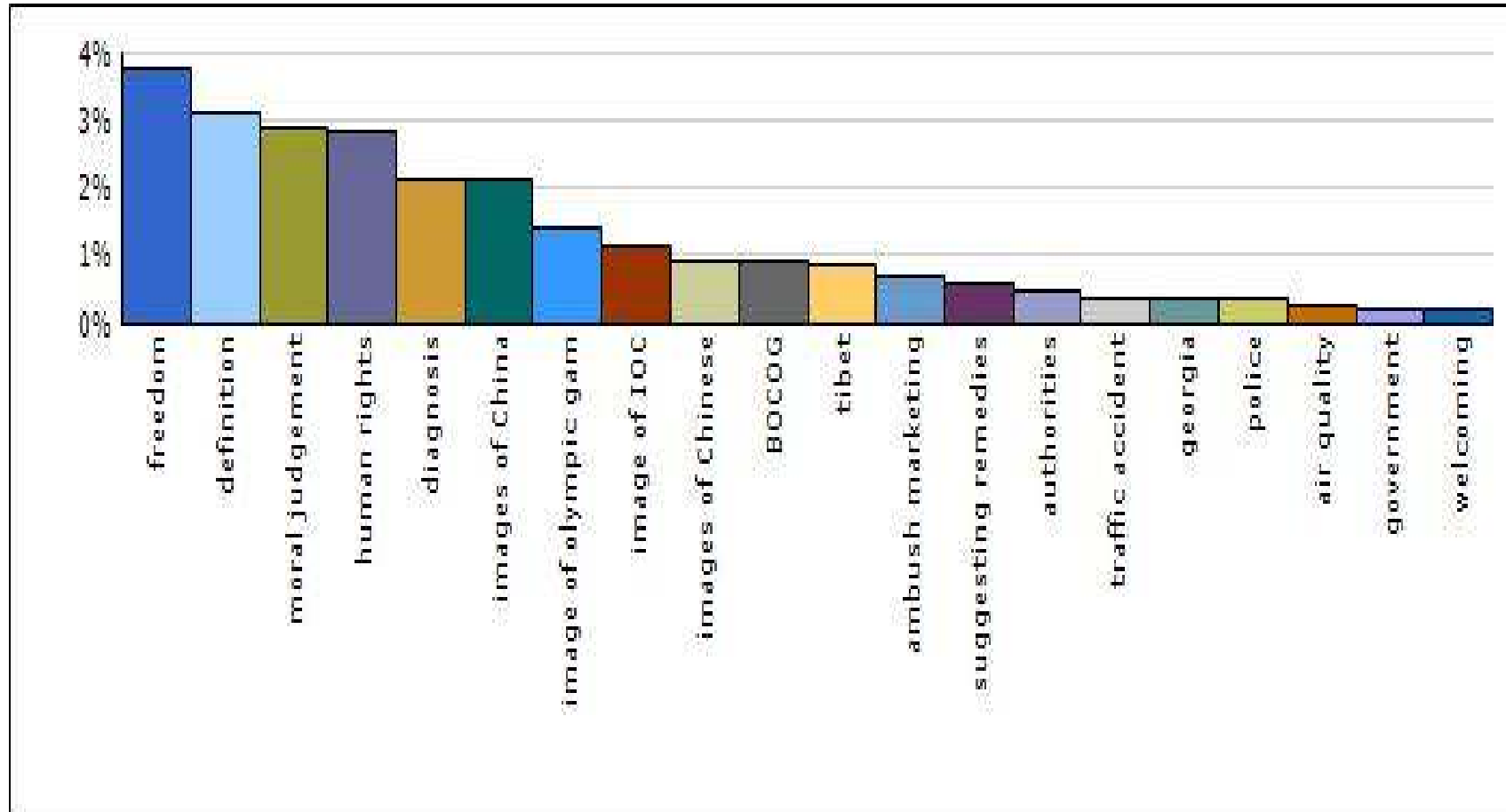
TIME QUALITY SPORT OPENING CHANNEL  
MOVEMENT HEALTH VALUES WELL VENUES  
ORGANISING JACQUES INTERNATIONAL DOPING COCA-COLA PEOPLE WORK  
TODAY ALSO COMMITTEE SPORTS NEW AUGUST MEMBERS IOG PRESIDENT WORLD IOG'S ENVIRONMENTAL CEREMONY ONE  
ATHLETES LIU CHINESE RESPECT  
GAMES OLYMPIC  
BEST AIR CITY MEDIA  
FIRST ROLE GREAT BOCOG ROGGE  
MEDAL BEIJING CHINA

# Resulting Frames

- **Definition (the problem)**
  - IOC regulations, Chinese political system, human rights violations/abuses, other
- **Diagnosis (what causes it)**
  - show, social stability, emancipation, human rights, other
- **Moral judgment**
  - Western moral superiority, Western political superiority/ Chinese political inferiority, Chinese people vs Chinese government, other
- **Remedies suggestion**
  - laws, international pressure, IOC pressure, boycott, other

### Advocacy groups framing functio





# Results

- Advocacy groups moved from a general to a very targeted communication strategy
  - strong images, powerful enumerations, metaphors and repetitions are specific to their style, double-speak
- IOC/BOCOG have a reactionary communication strategy
  - neutral, positive style focused on sport and the Olympic values and ideals

# Conclusions

- Human rights emerged as a potential debate and framing problem as early as 2001
- A more strategic approach of media analysis and a more proactive engagement in dialogue could have prevented the protests of 2008
- All parties make moral judgments
- There is no real, active dialogue between the actors
  - They communicate through media and provide their answers via media

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