First Year Seminar: Media and Politics Election 2004

POSC 100
Tues Thurs 10:30-12:15
Sayles-Hill 252
Prof. Barbara Allen
Willis 408
Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs
by appt. (sign-up)

The Course

This seminar will introduce you to the basic methods of political analysis through a case study of media and politics in the 2004 elections. We will study how media influence campaign spending and organization, consider the methods candidates use to package their messages, and the overall influence of media on electoral politics. We will learn about public opinion analysis and other ideas from the fields of political behavior and political psychology will be used to understand campaigns and elections. Our case study will include detailed content analysis of the local news coverage of the 2004 election. In addition to the books and articles listed below students are required to subscribe to the New York Times (you may share subscriptions if you wish).

The following books have been ordered for the course:


On reserve are:

Adler and Towne. “Listening v. Hearing”


Below are the readings and general topics for each of our meetings. In addition to coming to class prepared to discuss the readings you will write three essays: 1) an analysis of local election news coverage, 2) an “Ad Watch Analysis,” which focuses on specific television campaign ads, analyzing their scripts, visual texts, and evaluating the accuracy of their messages and 3) an analysis of the 2002 election results, focusing on the role media played in the election. Your essays will be based, in part, on data that we collect and analyze throughout the term. Our class joins POSC204 and POSC230 in a quantitative study of election coverage and political communication (ads, speeches, etc.). We use content analysis, focus group analysis, and other quantitative and qualitative approaches in our study. In addition to our our class meetings, we will hold several meetings to learn about content analysis, focus group moderating, and depth interviewing as well as a class field trip on election night. Participating in these activities will figure into your grade.
Grades will be computed as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Monitoring &amp; Content Analysis</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad Watch Analysis</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election Analysis</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Topics for Discussion and Reading Assignments:**

**Part 1: Democratic Theory and the Power of Media**
- **Tues Sept 14**
  - Introduction to the course
  - Communication and Self-Government
  - After our class read: Graber Ch 2
  - Rec: Alger Ch 1

- **Thurs Sept 16**
  - Studying Media: Research Design—Analyzing News and Ads
  - Read: Just Ch 1-2

- **Tues Sept 21**
  - Media as an Institution
  - Read: Cook Ch 4-5
  - Federalism and other Multi-tiered Designs
  - After class Rec: Federalist 1, 10, 15, 23, 45-5 (on reserve)
  - Rec: Alger 4-6

- **Thurs Sept 23**
  - How we will Conduct our Content Analysis
    - **Meet in the Library PC Lab (down one floor from main level)**
    - Stevens, et al. “The Ordinary Experience of Negative Advertising” (on reserve)

**Part 2: Media and Politics: Public Opinion, Socialization, and Participation**
- **Tues Sept 28**
  - Representation and Responsibility: Framing Effects
  - Read Iyengar “How Citizens Think” (on reserve)
  - Alger Ch 2

- **Thurs Sept 30**
  - Public Opinion 1: Definitions and Measurement
  - Read: Graber Ch 12
  - Allen “Tocqueville and Spiral of Silence” (on reserve)
  - Rec: Iyengar and Kinder Ch 1-5 (I’ll present; read what you can)

- **Tues Oct 5**
  - Public Opinion 2: Agenda Setting
  - Graber Ch 7-8, 22, 36
  - Iyengar and Kinder Ch 6-12 (fill in what you didn’t read for 30 Sept)

- **Thurs Oct 7**
  - Public Opinion 3: Narrative and Symbolism in News Reporting

- **Injection Professor Dean Alger Visits Class**
  - Read: Alger Ch 3
  - Graber Ch 6, rec: 10

- **Tues Oct 12**
  - Public Opinion 4: Campaign Advertising
  - Read: Alger Ch 11 324-334, Just 4-6

- **View A Sample of Campaign Ads and News from the 2004 Election**

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Thurs Oct 14  Public Opinion 5: Framing and Priming Effects in the News
Review: Iyengar and Kinder Ch 3-4, 7, 11
Read: Cook Ch 6, Graber 13, 14, 24
Recommended ( reserve): Allen et.al “Media and the Gulf War”

**Turn in /Upload Third Content Analysis & Compilation Files 10/14**

Part 3: Media and Electoral Politics

Tues Oct 19 Primaries, Conventions and General Elections
Covering Candidates and Campaigns
Read: Alger Ch 10, 11, 290-324; 334-338
Just, Ch 3;
Graber Ch 16
Kaid Ch 3, (Kolar “Fighting Back: American
Political Parties Take to the Airwaves”) (on reserve)

******************First Essay on Election New Coverage Due******************

5:00 Eat Pizza, View *Primary*:Documentary of 1960 Wisconsin Presidential Primary

Thurs Oct 21 Candidate Information 1: Speeches and Debates
Read: Alger Ch 12, 338-353

**Turn in/Upload Fourth Content Analysis & Compilation Files 10/21**

Tues Oct 26 Candidate Information 2: Campaign Advertising
Videographic Techniques and “Truth Tests”
Read: Graber 13, 14
Kaid, Ch 1 (Jamieson, “The Evolution
of Political Advertising in America”) (on reserve)

******************Ad Watch Analysis Due******************

Thurs Oct 28 Candidate Information 3: Campaign Advertising, Analysis
Read: Alger Ch 12, 353-378 and Kaid, Ch 2 (Devlin, “An Analysis
of Presidential Television Commercials 1952-1982”) (on reserve)
and Ch 7 (Kaid and Davidson, “Elements of Videostyle”)
Just 7

**Turn in/Upload Fifth Content Analysis & Compilation Files 10/28**

Tues Nov 2 Candidate Information 4: Campaign Advertising, Effects
Read: Alger Ch 13; Kaid, Ch 8, (Kundy, “Political Commercials
and Candidate Image: The Effect Can Be Substantial”— reserve)
Graber 17
Rec: Just 8

******************VOTE*****Leave Campus 5:00 for Election Night Party******************

Thurs Nov 4 TV: racial attitudes and gender gap
Read: Carlson and Trichtinger, “Perspectives on Entertainment”
Kern and Just, “A Gender Gap Among Viewers,”
Fife, “Racial Diversity”
Iyengar, et al. “Running as a Woman” (on reserve)

**Turn in/Upload Sixth (Final!) Content Analysis & Compilation Files 11/4**

Tues Nov 9 Talk Radio
Read: Kohut and Parker, “Talk Radio and Gender Politics”
Rec: Knight and Barker, “‘Talk Radio Turns the Tide’?” (reserve)

Thurs Nov 11 Interpreting Messages and Voting — Assessing the Election
Just 9

******************ATTEND NOV 12 CONVO Report on the Class Project******************

Tues Nov 16 Public Discourse and Political Decisions, Prospects for Change
Just Ch 10
Cook Ch 8

****************Election 2004 Analysis Due in Class******************