Media and Electoral Politics in 1996

Course: **PS 100**

Professor: **Barbara Allen**
Class Period: **Tues, Thurs 10:30-12:15**
Class Location: **Library 344**
Office Location: **Willis 408**
Office Hours: **Wed 1:30-4:00 and Mon, Tue, Thurs by appt. (sign-up)**

The Course

This seminar will introduce you to the basic methods of political analysis through a ase study of media and politics in the 1996 elections. We will study how media influence campaign spending and organization, consider the various methods by which candidates package their messages, and the overall effect of media on electoral politics. Various concepts from public opinion analysis and the fields of political behavior and political psychology will be used to understand campaigns and elections. Students must have access to a television and radio for nightly analysis of campaign new and will be required to subscribe to the *New York Times*. In addition to following the presidential and congressional elections in general, we will focus on the Minnesota 7th and 1st Congressional districts and US Senate races to learn more about local news coverage and political participation. The class will work with social scientists across Minnesota on a project known as the Minnesota Compact and will preparing seminar papers based on this research.

Readings

The following books have been ordered for the course:

- Dean E. Alger, 1996. *The Media and Politics* 2nd edition, New York:Wadsworth Publishing, 0534-23694-4.
- James S. Fishkin, 1995. *The Voice of the People: Public Opinion and Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 0300-06556-6.
- Doris Graber, 1988. *Processing the News*, 2nd ed. New York: Longman.
- Shanto Iyengar, 1987. *Us Anyone Responsible?* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 0226-38854-9.
- Marion Just, et. al. 1996 *Crosstalk: Citizens, Candidates, and Media in a Presidential Campaign*, Chicago: Univeristy of Chicago Press, 0226-42021-3.
- Lynda Lee Kaid, et al. 1986. *New Perspectives on Political Advertising*, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. 0-8093-1264-6
- James Madison, John Jay, and Alexader Hamilton, *The Federalist*, 1789. New York: Modern Library, 394-30961-8.

- Michael Nelson, 1993. *The Election of 1992*, Washington D.C. Congressional Quarterly.

- A. James Reichley, 1992. *The Life of the Parties: A History of The American Political Parties*. New York: Free Press.

- Frank J. Sorauf, 1992. *Inside Campaign Finance: Myth and Reality*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

On reserve are:

- Lynda Lee Kaid, et al. 1986. *New Perspectives on Political Advertising*, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. 0-8093-1264-6 (The chapters that we are using)

- Barbara Allen, "The Spiral of Silence and Institutional Design: Tocqueville's analysis of public opinion and democracy." *Polity*, 24:2 (winter), 1991, 243-267.

- Barbara Allen, Paula O'Laughlin, Amy Jasperson, and John L. Sullivan"The Media and the Gulf War: Framing, Priming, and the Spiral of Silence," *Polity*, 27: 2 (winter) 1994, 255-284.

Course Requirements

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 be involved as a group in two data collection projects that will provide the basic information for your individual research papers. The first project, "Media Monitoring" involves collecting data on local newspaper and television coverage of the 1st and 7th Congressional and Minnesota's US Senate elections. The second project, "Ad Watch Analysis," focuses on specific television campaign ads, analyzing their scripts, visual texts, and evaluating the accuracy of their messages.

Grades will be computed as:

Research Paper.....**50%**
Media Monitoring.....**25%**
Ad Watch Analysis.....**25%**
Total.....**100%**

Topics for Discussion and Reading Assignments

Part 1: Democratic Theory

Thur Sept 12

Self-Government and Democracy

Read: The Federalist 1 and 6-10; Iyengar intro, Fishkin Ch 1

Tues Sept 17

Participation and Representation
Read: The Federalist 15-17 and 21-24; Fishkin Ch 2; Alger Ch 1 and 15

***** Media Monitoring: NEWSPAPERS *****

Thur Sept 19

Representation and Responsibility
Read: The Federalist 15-17 and 21-24; Iyengar Ch 1

Tues Sept 24

Federalism and other Multi-tiered Designs
Read: The Federalist 45-51

Part 2: Media and Politics: Public Opinion, Socialization, and Participation

Thur Sept 26

Public Opinion 1: Definitions and Measurement
Read: Alger Ch 2; B. Allen "Tocqueville and Spiral of Silence" (on reserve); Fiskin Ch 5.

***** Media Monitoring: TELEVISION *****

Tue Oct 1

Public Opinion 2: Narrative and Symbolism in News Reporting
Read: Alger Ch 3 and Iyengar Ch 2

Thur Oct 3

Public Opinion 3: Information Process Models and Political Socialization
Read: Iyengar Ch 3 and 5; B. Allen et.al "Media and the Gulf War" (on reserve); Graber Ch 1, 5 and 7

Tues Oct 8

Public Opinion 4: Assessing Content
Read: Iyengar Ch 3 and 5; B. Allen et.al "Media and the Gulf War" (on reserve)

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

Thurs Oct 10

The Structure of News Organization and The Voices of Citizens, (Political Communication and Participation)
Read: Fishkin Ch 5 and Alger Ch 4

Tues Oct 15

Government - Media Links
Read: Alger Ch 8 and 9

Part 3: Electoral Politics

Thurs Oct 17

The Electoral System: Primaries, Conventions, and General Elections
Read: in Nelson, Ch 1 (Stokes & Dijulio, "The Setting") and Ch 2 (Barilleaux and Adkins, "Nomination") and Alger Ch 10

Tues Oct 22

Campaigns and Parties
Read: Reichley, Part 4 "Contemporary Parties" (Ch 18-20) and Kaid Ch 3, (Kolar "Fighting Back: American Political Parties Take to the Airwaves")

Thur Oct 24

Money and Interests: PACs and Campaign Financing
Read: Sorauf Ch 4, 6, and 8

Part 4: Media and Elections

Tues Oct 29

Covering Candidates and Campaigns
Read: Alger Ch 11, 290-324; 334-338

Thur Oct 31

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

Tues Nov 5

Candidate Information 2: Campaign Advertising, Design and Coverage
Read: Alger Ch 11 324-334, Kaid, Ch 1 (Jamieson, "The Evolution of Political Advertising in America,")

***** Evening Session on Election Results *****

Thur Nov 7

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) and Ch 7 (Kaid and Davidson, "Elements of Videostyle")

Tues Nov 12

Candidate Information 4: Campaign Advertising, Effects
Read: Alger Ch 13; Kaid, Ch 8, (Kundy, "Political Commercials and Candidate Image: The Effect Can Be Substantial")
Class Presentations

Thur Nov 14

********** **Final Version of Paper Due in Class** **********